

A R E T I N:
A DIALOGUE ON PAINTING.
FROM THE ITALIAN OF
L O D O V I C O D O L C E.

**LONDON, PRINTED FOR P. ELMSLEY,
SUCCESSOR TO MR. VAILLANT, IN THE
STRAND; AND SOLD BY I. DODSLEY, IN
PALL MALL; G. PEARCE, IN CHEAPSIDE;
M. HINGESTON, NEAR TEMPLE BAR;
D. PRINCE, AT OXFORD; AND
MR. BRAIM, PAINTER, AND
PRINTSELLER, IN
CATHERINE STREET,
IN THE STRAND.
MDCCLXX.**



K I N G

The following is a list of the
names of the persons who have
been appointed to the
positions of the highest position,
and



TO THE
K I N G.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY,

TH E patronage of the
Liberal Arts has ever been
esteemed worthy the attention
of the greatest Sovereigns. Un-
der their auspices they have
attained the highest perfection,
and

DEDICATION.

and have added to the crown a new and brilliant lustre. The smiles of Kings, like the benign rays of the sun, bring to perfection every object which partakes of their influence.

THE patronage so liberally extended to the Arts by Your Majesty, by the institution of the Incorporated Society of Artists, and in the endowment of a Royal Academy ; and the elegant manufacture founded
by

DEDICATION.

by your Royal Confort, with
equal honor to her taste and
humanity ; encourage us to
hope, they will in this king-
dom rival those of Italy. The
Genius of England points out
Your Majesty to be the Mo-
narch of an happy, free, and
enlightened nation -- the Pa-
tron of Arts and Learning--the
Father of your Country ; and
intimates to us with pleasure,
that when future ages shall con-
template

DEDICATION.

temple the epochas of Pericles, of Augustus, of Leo, and of Louis, they will add, as worthy of equal honor, that of
GEORGE THE THIRD.

I have the happiness of being

Your MAJESTY's most obedient,

and dutiful subject and servant,

The TRANSLATOR.

By permission of my Friend, the ingenious Author, whose modesty will not suffer me to disclose his name, I prefix the following elegant copy of verses, on the Origin of the Art of Painting. The reader will find the story on which it is founded, related in Mr. Webb's Enquiry into the Beauties of Painting, p. 26.

JAM lugubris adest, lugubris amantibus hora,
 Carbasa turgentes explicuere noti.
 Nec mora ; te Corydon vocat invidus aufer in altum,
 Totaque nautarum littora voce sonant
 Quid faciat miser ? An pelagus nymphamve relinquet ?
 Hæret & incerto corde per ossa tremit.
 Nunc mare, nunc terras, nunc ipsam versus ad * Acmen,
 Ire, manere, cupit, sperat & horret idem.
 Tandem fama prior, stimulusque accendit honorum,
 Ardet & ingenuo pectore laudis amor.
 Mavorti, Patriæque piget præponere amorem.
 Militiæ cedunt mollia castra Dei.
 Ultima jam flenti juvenis dabat oscula nymphæ.
 Nulla est restandi causa, nec ulla moræ.
 Pænè aberat, cum nympa videns in pariete formam
 Consimilem juveni, brachia, crura, manus,
 Continuo exclamat, Corydonis vivet imago,
 Nec totum immitis transferet unda virum !

* Septimii Meretrix. Vide Catull.

Sic dicens : tenui signavit membra sagittâ,
 Oraque adumbravit, purpureamque genam.
 Jam spirat juvenile decus jam gratia vivit,
 Ora, oculique, manus, totaque forma micant.
 Hic videt absentem, quamvis in funere, amantem,
 Mirata artifices ipsa puella manus.
 Sic qui forte levi, puer inspiravit, avenæ,
 Obstupuit facilem, quem dedit ipse, sonum.
 Jam non deserta Virgo spatatur in actâ
 Luminibus volucrem sæpe secuta ratem :
 Dulcia namque adsunt oculis solamina quamvis
 Lintea præcipites eripuerunt noti.

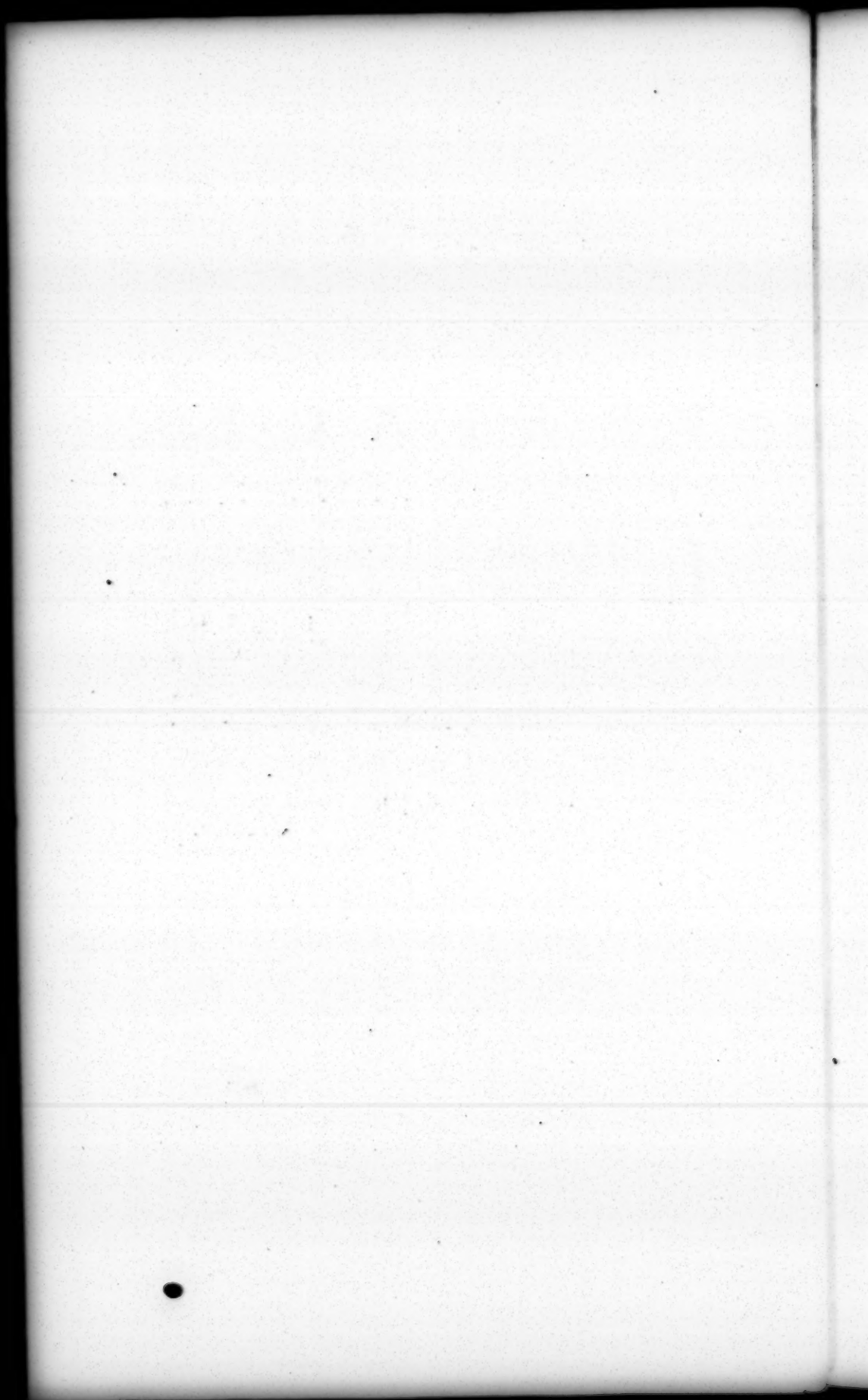
 E R R A T A.

Page 32, line 5, for *by*, read *in* ; p. 38, for *affestation*, r. *affection* ; at the end of the first note on p. 51, supply the initials *I. E.* p. 53, in the quotation from Martial, for *Flacci*, r. *Flacce* ; in the note on p. 68, l. 12, for *over-against*, r. *near* ; in note on p. 69, l. 9, for *battles*, r. *baths* ; p. 111, stanza 12, of the description of Alcina, l. 3. for *pietosi e*, r. *pietosi a* ; p. 113, stanza 14, l. ult. r. *s'asconde* ; p. 119, l. 1. r. *industri* ; p. 120, three lines from the bottom, for *and*, r. *who* ; p. 183, three lines from the bottom, for *thing ?*, r. *things ?* p. 194, note, l. 12, for *and*, r. *as* ; p. 227, l. ult. for *αἰωνομνησάν*, r. *αἰωνοδομήσαν*.

A DIALOGUE ON PAINTING.

ARS demonstrat—ubi quæras; atque ubi fit illud, quod studeas invenire: reliqua sunt in cura, attentione animi, cogitatione, vigilantia, assiduitate, labore. **Complectar uno verbo,**—diligentia: qua una virtute omnes virtutes reliquæ continentur.

CICERO.





P R E F A C E.

LODOVICO DOLCE, the author of the following work, ranked high among the Literati of the age of Clement the Seventh, was intimately connected with many of the most celebrated persons of his time, and esteemed by them and his contemporaries in general for his learning and taste *. He translated into his native language several of the most celebrated writings of antiquity; particularly those

* " At the first performance of his tragedy of Marianna, the theatre was so much crowded, that the players could not proceed."

Vid. Baretti, Ital. Libr.

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of

of Euripides, of Horace, and of Cicero; and also published several original works, in which he approved himself a man of extensive knowledge, an able critic, and an accomplished gentleman. No one, it is probable, among his numerous productions, is more perfect in its kind than his Dialogue on Painting; as he is said by those who pretend to know his history, and it is (I believe) generally accepted in his own country, that in it he had not only his own genius and abilities to consult, but had also the thoughts which Raphael had committed to writing upon the subject put into his hands to dispose and methodize; so that the preceptive part of the work may be supposed to be, in a great measure, the result of the knowledge of an artist whom his works testify

testify to have been fully and intimately acquainted with every secret of his profession. It is also highly probable that Aretin (who mentions Dolce in the Dialogue as his friend, and who was universally esteemed one of the most perfect connoisseurs of his age) assisted him in the compilation of it.—Dolce

* “Lodovico Dolce (says Zeno) could not have chose a properer person to entitle it than Aretin, who was very skilled in the art of drawing. The best professors of his time valued much Aretino for it. Giorgio Vasari had such an esteem for him, that in his paintings in the Ducal palace at Florence he painted him near Bembo and Ariosto. Sebastiano, of Venice, known under the name of Fra Bastian del Piombo, Raphael d’ Urbino, the engraver Leone d’ Arezzo, and the architect Serlius, were amongst his admirers. But his most intimate friend among this sort of people, was the renowned Titian.”

Baretti Ital. Libr.

A 2

would

would scarcely presume to publish a work in which a man of his eminence (especially one so terrible to his enemies), and with whom he was connected by private friendship, was made the principal speaker without his consent and approbation.—Aretin, on the other hand, we may reasonably suppose, would not suffer his name to be used so freely, unless the sentiments it was made to authorise, were such as himself would chuse to adopt. The work itself is, indeed, worthy of these great names. The precepts are clear, full, and judicious, delivered in the most * perspicuous manner possible. At the same time that no material part

* Carlo Maratti being asked by some of his friends how he obtained that perspicuity for which he was remarkable, in speaking of his art, replied, "By studying Dolce."

of

P R E F A C E.

v

of the art is left undiscussed, nothing is admitted either impertinent or superfluous. The comparison drawn between the merits of Raphael and Michael Angelo, is dictated by the most profound judgment, united with the most unbiaſſed mind. The characters of other artiſts are ſhort, and ſtrongly marked. The account of Titian and his works is entertaining. Throughout the whole we find the author learned, polite, ſenſible, and judicious. A work of this nature, it was thought, could not but be peculiarly uſeful to every ſtudent in painting, and acceptable to every gentleman who is deſirous of attaining a competent knowledge of the art, as it will enable him to diſtinguiſh the peculiar beauties and defects of a picture or maſter: that the man of letters

would be pleased with observing the strict connexion of the polite arts with each other, pointed out with precision and elegance, and the precepts belonging to one shewn to be applicable to the other : that it would be agreeable to them all to see the opinion the connoisseurs of their own age had of those artists, who are now become the standards of picturesque merit. These, together with the scarcity of the * ori-

* First published at Venice. — Dolce was born anno 1508, and died anno 1568. The following table shews how long he was contemporary with the principal artists, &c. of his time.

Popes. Julius II's pontificate began 1503, Leo X. 1513, Adrian VI. 1521, Clement VII. 1523, Paul III. 1534, Julius III. 1549, Marcellus II. 1555, Pius IV. 1559.—Artists.—M. Angelo, born 1474, died 1564. Titian, born 1477, died 1576. Raphael, born 1482, died 1520.—Literati.—Aretin, born 1496, died 1556. Ariosto, died 1523. Bembo, born 1470, died

ginal work, were esteemed sufficient motives for presenting Dolce to the public in an English dress ; more especially at this time, when, after several attempts to establish the arts of painting and sculpture in this kingdom, we at length have a fair prospect of their settling among us. Two * flourishing Societies have been formed for effecting this purpose, under the patronage of our most excellent Sovereign ; and the merits of several artists belonging to each of them, give us hopes that the idea of an English School is not so absurd as some writers,

died 1547. Tasso, born 1544, died 1595. San-
nazaro, born 1458, died 1530. Navagero,
born 1483, died 1539.

* The Society of Artists of Great Britain, incorporated by his majesty's charter, Jan. 26, in the 5th year of his present majesty's reign ; and the Royal Academy, instituted anno 1769.

proud of what they esteem a more favourable climate, have represented it. We see a noble spirit of emulation among our own artists, from which, and the liberal encouragement those of the greatest merit among them have received, we have a favourable prospect that this kingdom, already celebrated for its superiority in arms, will not be less so for the arts.

If we consider the state in which they are at present in the several countries where they formerly flourished, we shall find them not inferior in our own to any. They have totally deserted Greece, for a long time their favorite abode, and are so far degenerated in Italy, (where they revived in the pontificates of Julius II. Leo X. and Clement VII. after having lain in oblivion above one thousand years) that

we hear of very few celebrated painters there, and of NONE to rank with the old masters, since the death of Carlo Maratti and Sebastiano Conca.

France, the successor of Italy, finds her glories fading very fast. The encouragement the Arts received under Louis XIV. enabled them, for a time, to hold up their heads ; but the national character of the people, and the nature of the government, would not permit any long train of success. If we may be allowed to judge by the exhibition at the Louvre, this last summer, (1769) they are indeed at a very low ebb. Although they have only one exhibition in two years, and the artists are not divided into several distinct bodies, as they are here, it requires no hesitation to say, that the pictures *neither* equalled in number, or merit

merit, our annual exhibitions. Among them I do not remember one historical subject at all remarkable ; and indeed an * author, who professedly writes their panegyric, is obliged to apologize for the deficiency, from circumstances that only shew the taste of individuals to be at as low an ebb as the merit of the artists. He seems to have no idea of any historical pictures but such as are as large as Michel Angelo's Last Judgment, Raphael and Julio Romano's Battles, and other stupendous works in the palaces and churches of Italy. Notwithstanding this may in general be true, yet seve-

*Réflexions sur quelques Morceaux de Peinture, &c. exposés au Salon du Louvre, pendant le cours des mois d' Août et de Septembre, 1769, par M. Pingeron, Cap. d' Artillerie, et Ingénieur au service de Pologne,

ral

ral English artists have in our last and other late exhibitions, made it evident, that some of the principal merits of historical painting (in particular design and composition) may be comprized in the space of a cabinet picture *. Altho' I wish to avoid mentioning living artists by name, that I may not give umbrage to any, yet, lest those who have not seen our exhibitions should esteem this only to proceed from partiality, and a desire of making the state of the Arts here appear other than it really is, I can-

* "So compleat is the power of association, that a skilful painter can express any degree of sublimity in the smallest as well as in the largest compass. It appears in the miniatures of Julio Clovio, as really as in the paintings of Titian, or Michael Angelo."

Gerard on Taste, p. 22.

not

not help producing as instances, the *Regulus*, Jacob blessing Joseph's children, *Cleombrotus*, &c. of Mr. West; an artist, whose works would have done honour to Rome, even in the time of Raphael and Titian. The appeal might safely be lain with any person of taste and judgment, whether these and many other of our modern works do not fully prove this assertion.

As to other subjects which Mr. Pingeron calls "de genre *", we agree with him they have several artists who have a considerable share of merit. Among these we reckon M. Vernet's Sailors, M. Lautherbourg's Sea-scapes, M. Greuze, the two Messrs. Vanloo,

* The French understand by this term, all the inferior species of painting, as landscape, portrait, still-life, &c.

and

P R E F A C E. xiii

and M. Dupleffis's Portraits; but at the same time, we think them in general equalled, perhaps surpassed by several of the productions of our own artists. M. Chardin's allegorical picture of the Attributes of the Arts had, in our opinion, great merit; but allegorical painting can never acquire to the artist the highest degree of commendation. The fruit, flowers, and still-life, were extremely inferior to the productions of our best artists in those subjects.

As sculpture and engraving are not the subject of the following Work, nothing will be said here of their present state in France; but this account of the exhibition will be closed by mentioning the PORTRAITS of the present KING and late QUEEN in TAPESTRY, done at the Gobelins, after Messrs. Vanloo

Vanloo and Nattier's Portraits. We readily acknowledge this manufacture to excel any TAPESTRY that ever was executed. The two portraits already mentioned, and the whole length of his majesty, which was lately shewn at the Gobelins, and was presented to the king of Denmark, during his stay at Paris, are really fine : still it must be allowed, that fruit and flowers are more proper subjects for this manufacture than portraits. And in these, the English nation has a prospect of exhibiting a work, which, by the best judgment we can form of it, from what is already executed, will, for delicacy of materials, elegance of design, and beauty of execution, far exceed any thing that has hitherto been done in any nation. The lovers of the Arts who have seen this work, must

must know we mean the elegant chef d'œuvre of the Arts, embroidering, under the patronage of our most amiable Queen, from the designs, and under the superintendence of a Lady already sufficiently known for the excellence and superiority of her genius and taste.

Having paid this just tribute to the state of the Arts in our own country, we shall conclude with mentioning, that a few Notes are added, to shew how far more modern writers upon the same subject agree with, or differ from, our author. All those which are collected, are ascribed to their proper authors. Those marked with the initial letters, *J. E.* (Italian Editor) are selected from those of the edition of Dolce, printed, together with a French translation, at Florence,

1735.

1735. It was thought necessary, in some places, to make the following translation very free, in order to illustrate the sense of the author. If the attempt shall prove any way promotive of the Arts, the Translator's wishes will be accomplished, his work being sacred to the labors of the ARTIST, and to PUBLIC UTILITY !





A R E T I N:
OR, A
D I A L O G U E
ON
P A I N T I N G.



PETER ARETIN AND JOHN FRANCIS FABRINI.

A R E T I N.

IFTEEN days ago, my dear friend
F Fabrini, being in the beautiful
church of St. John and St. Paul;
whither I had gone in company with the
learned Camillo, to celebrate the festival
B of

2 A DIALOGUE ON

of Peter Martyr, performed there every day at the altar over which is placed the large picture of the history of that saint *,

* An elegant French Critic, speaking of the superiority of expression to beautiful colouring, makes the following remarks upon this picture, viz. “ Le tableau de ce grand peintre (Titien), qui représente Saint Pierre Martyr, religieux Dominicain, massacré par les Vaudois, n’est peutêtre pas, tout admirable qu’il est par cet endroit même, le plus précieux par la richesse des couleurs locales. — Mais l’action de ce tableau est intéressante, et le Titien l’a traitée avec plus de vraisemblance et avec une expression des passions plus étudiées que celles de ces autres ouvrages. — The picture of this great master representing St. Peter Martyr, a religious of the order of St. Dominic, massacred by the Vandals, is not, probably, his most valuable picture for the richness of local colours. — But the action is interesting, and Titian has treated the subject with more verisimilitude, and studied expression of the passions, than any other of his works.” Vid. *Du Bos sur la Poésie et la Peinture*, Tom. I. p. 72. And there are good judges at this day who think this picture no way inferior to any other of Titian’s works in point of colouring.

so divinely executed by the delicate hand of my illustrious friend Titian*; I thought I saw you there contemplating, with fixed attention, the picture of Thomas Aquinas, in company with other saints, which was painted many years ago in water-colours by Giovanni Bellino the Venetian†; and, had we not been prevented by M. Antonio Anselmo, who carried us to the house of M. Bembo, we should have seized upon you unexpectedly, and made you our prisoner for the whole day. Now, recollecting to have seen you so entirely taken up in contem-

* Titian was born at Cadore, in the state of Venice, anno 1477, and died of the plague in 1576, æt. 99.

† Bellino was Titian's master. He died at Venice in 1512, aged 90. There is an excellent picture of his in the church of St. Zachary at Venice. F. E. Du Fresnoy says, his manner, according to the taste of his time, was extremely dry; that he perfectly understood architecture and perspective.

4 A DIALOGUE ON

plating this picture, give me leave to assure you, I think it worthy of admiration; for every figure is well painted, some of the heads are beautiful, and the carnations and draperies are natural: from whence we may allow, that Bellino, considering the age he lived in, was a good and diligent master. But he has since been greatly surpassed by George da Castelfranco; and the latter hath been left still farther behind by Titian, who hath given to his figures such an heroic majesty, hath practised so soft a manner of colouring, and his tints so nearly approach the truth, that we may say, without exaggeration, they rival Nature herself.

FABRINI.

It is not my custom, Aretin, to blame any one: But I shall declare my sentiments freely to you, that whoever has seen the pictures of the divine Michael Angelo,

P A I N T I N G. 5

Angelo, need never (if I may be allowed the expression) open his eyes to see the works of any other painter whatever.

A R E T I N.

You go too far, and injure many excellent painters ; as Rafaello da Urbino, Antonio Correggio, Francesco Parmegiano, Giulio Romano, Polidoro, and our Titiano Vecellio, who have adorned Rome, and indeed all Italy, with such stupendous works of their painting, and thrown such light on their art, that perhaps many ages shall not find one so excellent to add to their number. I omit Andrea del Sarto, Perrino del Vaga, and Pordonone, who were nevertheless good painters, and whose works merit the consideration and applause of the learned and judicious.

F A B R I N I.

As Homer ranks first among the Greek,
Virgil among the Roman, and Dante

B 3

among

6 A DIALOGUE ON

among the Italian poets, so does Michael Angelo* among the painters and sculptors of the present age.

A R E T I N.

I do not deny that Michael Angelo is at this time almost a miracle in the joint excellencies of nature and art. They who do not admire his works must be totally void of judgment, particularly in design, in which he is without doubt most thoroughly learned. He was the first artist of the present age who exhibited beautiful forms, artful foreshortenings, relievos, elegant action, and every grace necessary to form a nud in perfection; a thing never seen before his time, except the nuds of such artists as Apelles and Zeuxis, which we may judge to have been most admirable from the testimo-

* Lord Shaftesbury calls Michael Angelo, the great beginner and founder among the moderns. Ch. i. 144.

P A I N T I N G. 7

nies of the antient poets, and other writers, as well as by what little we can observe in the few remains which the injuries of time and hostile nations have left us. But there is no reason for our confining our praises to one alone; the bounty of heaven having produced painters equal, and in some respects superior to Michael Angelo, as are undoubtedly some of those I have mentioned.

F A B R I N I.

PARDON me, Signor Aretin, you are certainly deceived, if this be your opinion: the excellence of Michael Angelo is such, that without exaggeration we may compare it to the light of the sun, which not only far surpasses, but extinguishes every other light.

A R E T I N.

YOUR thoughts are poetical, and such as are frequently inspired by affection,
“ che spesso occhio ben fan fa veder torto,

B 4

“ which

8 A DIALOGUE ON

“ which often turns assant the truest eye.”
 But you being a Florentine, it is no wonder the love of your country should make you esteem the works of Michael Angelo alone as gold, while all others appear to you vile and worthless. Had not this been the case, you would have remembered, that in the age of Alexander the Great, although Apelles was unanimously extolled to the skies, yet a proportionable degree of honour was paid to Zeuxis, Protogenes, Timanthes, Polignotus, and other excellent painters. So also among the Roman poets *, Virgil was always esteemed divine, yet none

* Horace, speaking of the Greek poets, says,

Non, si priores Mæonius tenet
 Sedes Homerus, Pindaricæ latent,
 Cæque, & Alcæi minaces,
 Stesichorique, graves Camenæ.
 Nec, si quid olim lussit Anacreon,
 Delevit ætas.

Lib. iv. Od. ix.

ever

P A I N T I N G. 9

ever despised or neglected Ovid, Horace, Lucan, Statius, and other poets, who, though they differ one from another, yet all of them are excellent in their peculiar province or manner of writing. And though Dante is replete with learning, who does not take great pleasure in the graceful Petrarca? The greater number even prefer him. If Homer stands alone among the Greek poets, the reason is, that others did not write in that language upon the warlike subjects, except Quintus Calaber*, who prosecuted the

Which Pope hath beautifully imitated and applied:

Though daring Milton fits sublime,
In Spenser native muses play;
Nor yet shall Waller yield to time,
Nor pensive Cowley's moral lay.

* Quintus Calaber is supposed by Vossius to have lived about the year 491. His Continuation of Homer was found in Calabria, by Card. Bessation. Vid. L'Advocat. Dict. Hist.

same

same subject, and Apollonius, who wrote the Argonautics, neither of whom fell far short even of Homer himself. Those persons seem to me too contracted, who confine their judgment of any thing to one mode or form, and condemn all that vary from it: Such Horace ridiculed in the character of a coxcomb, whose taste was so very delicate, that he never sung or recited any verses, except those of Catullus or Calvus. And were Horace now living, and you the subject of his satire, he might much more ridicule you for desiring that men should shut their eyes against all paintings except Michael Angelo's, at a time, as I said before, when Heaven has given us painters equal and even superior to him.

FABRINI.

AND where do you find another Michael Angelo, much less a greater?

ARETIN.

P A I N T I N G. 11

A R E T I N.

THOUGH it seems childish to repeat the same thing again, yet I must once more aver, that there are at this present time, painters equal, and in some respects superior, to Michael Angelo.

F A B R I N I.

AND I will always repeat, that Michael Angelo stands unequalled.

A R E T I N.

I WISH rather to decline the parallel, and avoid comparisons.

F A B R I N I.

I THINK conversation between us ought to be perfectly free, and wish you would chuse one whom you think more illustrious among the painters to confront with Michael Angelo; and when I know your reason, it may possibly happen I may change my opinion.

A R E T I N.

A R E T I N.

It is a difficult matter to eradicate from the mind of another, an opinion which has been a long time planted and nourished by affection. Yet as truth ought not to be passed over in silence, I will do all in my power to free you from the error in which you seem entangled.

F A B R I N I.

I SHALL acknowledge myself much obliged to you.

A R E T I N.

AND what will you say if I begin with Raphael?

F A B R I N I.

THAT he was a great painter — but not equal to Michael Angelo.

A R E T I N.

A R E T I N.

YOUR judgment is very singular; do not pronounce so peremptorily.

F A B R I N I.

YET this is the general opinion.

A R E T I N.

PERHAPS it may among the ignorant, who follow the judgment of others without knowing the reason why, or of those pseudo-painters, who ape Michael Angelo.

F A B R I N I.

Nor so, but of such as are learned and skilful in the art.

A R E T I N.

I know that at Rome, while Raphael was living, the learned, and the most skilful artists there, preferred him to Michael Angelo as a painter; and that
those

those who held him inferior, were for the most part sculptors, who considered only Michael Angelo's excellence in design, and the forcible air of his figures; esteeming the graceful and gentle manner of Raphael too easy, and consequently not so artificial; not knowing that ease is the highest accomplishment of any art, and the most difficult to be attained; that hiding art is the utmost extent of art; and that other requisites are absolutely necessary to constitute a painter besides design. Were we to call in the best judges of painting, whether painters or others, we should find their votes all in favour of Raphael. All those among the multitude who are superior to the vulgar, would be unanimous in the same decision. Nay, were the common people in general to press in to see the works of the one and the other, their suffrages would undoubtedly be in favour of Raphael. The partisans of Michael Angelo
them-

themselves, even They allow the works of Raphael never fail of giving the highest pleasure. But this is not sufficient to the purpose; therefore, laying aside all authority, let us proceed upon the solid basis of reason.

F A B R I N I.

I HEAR you attentively, esteeming your penetration and judgment in every kind of learning, and particularly your knowledge and precision in painting.

A R E T I N.

You know that Raphael* and I were intimate friends, and that the same intimacy now subsists between Michael Angelo and me; whose letter, in answer to mine concerning the history of his last picture, evinces in what estimation he holds my

* Raphael da Urbino was born at Urbino on Good Friday, in the year 1482; and died also on Good Friday, in the year 1520. æt. 37.

judg-

judgment: and Agustino Ghigi, were he living, could testify how much Raphael confided in it, that he consulted me upon every picture before he exposed it to public view, and that I was in a great measure the cause of his painting the cielings of his house. But although both of them hold the same place in my esteem, yet truth is still more dear to me than friendship. However, with a view to utility, I will endeavour to gratify your curiosity in this matter, notwithstanding the inequality is already decided in favour of Raphael by the best judges, as it will necessarily lead me to explain what painting is, what the office and duties of a painter, and to treat briefly of the importance of painting in general, to draw a parallel between the two masters in question, and to speak also of the relative merits of others, especially of Titian.

FABRINI.

F A B R I N I.

I know that many authors have written honourably of Raphael ; as Bembo, who equals him to Michael Angelo, and who wrote when Raphael was young ; Castiglione, who gives him the first place ; and Polidore Virgil, who equals him to Apelles, as also does Vafari in his Lives of the Painters *. I know, on the other

* To these might now be added almost all the modern writers on the subject.

Du Fresnoy, in his elegant Latin poem de Arte Graphica, after speaking in general of the Roman, Venetian, and other schools, says,

Hos apud invenit Raphael miracula summo
Ducta modo Veneresque habuit quas nemo
deinceps.

And De Piles, in his Commentary, equals him in excellence of grace to Apelles, who possessed it in a degree far superior to all others among the antients.

C

hand,

18 A DIALOGUE ON

hand, that Ariosto * in the beginning of the 33d Canto of his Orlando Furioso,

* Ariosto, after having in the preceding stanza enumerated the most celebrated among the ancient artists, adds,

E quei, che furo a nostri Di, o son ora
Leonardo, Andrea Mantegna, Gian Bellino,
Duo Dossi, e Quel, che par sculpe & colora
Michael, piu che mortal, Angel divino ;
Bastiano, Rafael, Tizian, ch' onora
Non men Cador, che quei Venezia e Urbino
E gli altri, di cui tal l'opra si vede,
Qual della prisca eta si legge e crede. St. 2.

And those whom modern times consign to fame,
Da Vinci, Bellin, and Mantegna's name,
Dossi and Him, whose equal art displays
Sculpture and painting claiming equal praise ;
Him, more than mortal (as his name implies,)
An angel given by propitious skies ;
While Urbin Raphael's well-lov'd name shall boast,
To Venice Bastian's merit is not lost ;
Cadora, blest by bounteous Fortune's hand,
Distinguish'd for her Titian's birth shall stand :
And others, who an equal rank would claim
Among the antients of immortal fame.

distinguishes,

distinguishes Michael Angelo so far from other painters, as to give him the epithet of "divine." But, as you desire, I will rest nothing upon authority, how learned soever, but on reason alone: for were I to rely on the judgment of others, I should certainly prefer yours to them all.

A R E T I N.

You do me too much honour. —
Ariosto has shewn a most acute genius throughout the whole of his work, except in this passage. I do not mean to find fault with his praising Michael Angelo, who is truly worthy of high applause, but in placing among the illustrious painters the Dosfi of Ferrara, one of whom studied for some time here under Titian, and the other in Rome under

The praise contained in the *jeu des mots*, in the fourth line of the original, as Mr. Webb justly observes, "is excessive, not decisive; it carries no idea." *Enquiry into the Beauties of Painting*, p. 166.

Raphael; and yet both of them adopted so bad a manner, that they were unworthy of the praises of so excellent a poet. But this, indeed, might have been in some measure excusable, from the great love he had for his country, had he not committed a still greater error in joining the name of Bastian* with Raphael and Titian, at a time when there were many other painters far more excellent than he, who yet were not worthy to stand in competition with either of these. But such a peccadillo (if with the Spaniard I may so call it) is no argument against Ariosto's being a most accomplished poet, since these things do not

* Sebastian of Venice, generally called Fra. Bastiano del Piombo, from an office he held under Clement VII. was a disciple of Bellino, and afterwards of Giorgione, and came to Rome with Agustin Ghigi, where he was undeservedly put in competition with Raphael. He died in June 1547, aged 62.

immedi-

immediately fall within the province of a poet. Nor would I infer that Bastian had no merit as a painter; for it frequently happens, that a gem when seen alone may claim great merit, yet when compared with others far more brilliant, shall seem to lose all its lustre. Besides, it is well known Michael Angelo drew all Bastian's designs; and he who adorns himself with the plumage of others, when stript of these must appear like the crow which Horace describes *. I remember when Bastian was pushed forwards by Michael Angelo to contend with Raphael, the latter used to say, " It pleases me
 " much that Michael Angelo assists my

* Ne, si forte suas repetitum venerit olim
 Grex avium plumas, moveat cornicula risum
 Furtivis nudata coloribus. En. lib. i. c. 3.

Lest, when the birds their various colors claim,
 Stript of his stolen pride, the crow forlorn
 Should stand, the laughter of the public scorn.

Francis.

“ new rival, by making his designs, as
 “ he must know, while common fame
 “ gives the preference to my paintings,
 “ that I not only conquer Bastian, which
 “ would do me little honor, but even
 “ Michael Angelo himself, who is in
 “ his own opinion (and justly) the very
 “ idea of design *.”

F A B R I N I.

It is true, Bastian was a very unequal
 match for Raphael, even when armed
 with Michael Angelo's lance; not know-
 ing how to use it: much less, as I am
 inclined to think, could he rival Titian,
 who lately told me, that when Rome
 was sacked by the soldiers of Bourbon,
 some Germans among them were quar-

* Du Fresnoy, in his poem *de Arte Graphica*, has
 admirably expressed M. Angelo's excellence in de-
 sign, in one line:

Quicquid erat formæ scivit Bonarota potenter.
 Of form and beauty ev'ry art he knew.

tered

tered in the pope's palace, by whose carelessness, or by accident, some of the heads of the figures in one of the chambers, painted by Raphael, were greatly injured; and that on pope Clement's return to his palace, he was extremely affected at seeing those exquisite heads so much defaced, and employed Bastian to repair them. Titian being afterwards at Rome, went to the palace, and in passing through the apartments with Bastian, stedfastly fixed his attention upon these pictures of Raphael, which he had never before seen; and coming to the parts Bastian had repaired, and discerning the wide difference between these and the others, with great warmth and resentment asked him what presumptuous Ignorant had spoiled those heads; not knowing they had been repaired by Bastian. But let us lay aside those inequalities, which are of no importance, and proceed.

A R E T I N.

I REMEMBER to have heard the same story from others.

F A B R I N I.

PRAY now, Aretin, indulge me with your sentiments of painting; and first, what painting is?

A R E T I N.

I SHALL readily do it as I proposed, though every one is agreed in the definition. To speak briefly, therefore, painting is no other than the imitation of Nature, and he who approaches nearest to her is the greatest master. But this definition alone may be thought insufficient, as it does not distinguish the painter from the poet, whose office also is the imitation of Nature. I will therefore add, the painter endeavours to represent Nature by means of lines and colours, whether
on

on the plain of a tablet, or of a wall or canvas, in whatsoever is perceptible to the eye ; and the poet, by the medium of words, represents not only what is apparent to the eye, but whatever else is objective to the understanding. This is the only difference between painting and poetry : in every other respect they are so similar as to be esteemed sisters.

F A B R I N I.

THIS definition is proper and distinct, and the similitude between the poet and the painter is just. Others have esteemed the painter a mute poet *, and the poet a speaking painter.

* Ut pictura poesis erit : similisque poesi
Sit pictura, refert per æmula quæque sororem
Alterantque vices & nomina ; MUTA POESIS
Dicitur hæc, PICTURA LOQUENS solet illa vocari.

Du Fresnoy de Arte Graph.

The painter who has not a poetical invention, and the poet who cannot paint to the mind of the reader, are unworthy the names. There have been
many

A R E T I N.

ALTHOUGH the painter cannot represent those things which immediately relate

many persons, who, from the same bent of genius, have practised both these arts with success. Every one has heard of the sonnets of Michael Angelo, and the satires for which Salvator Rosa was almost as celebrated as for his paintings. Mr. Dryden was at least an excellent judge of painting, if not an artist; and the celebrated Mr. Pope was no mean proficient in drawing.

There never was, perhaps, a greater instance of poetry in painting, than in the expression of the passions in Timantes' Sacrifice of Iphigenia; where the painter, having represented the different passions in the countenances of the bystanders, finding himself unable to express his idea of the variety and violence of the passions impressed on the countenance of the father, covered his face with a veil. The like was done by Titian, in his picture of the Death of Germanicus, where his mother's face is also hid by a veil. And the description of Laocoon in Virgil, of Niobe in Ovid, and of Pluto starting from his throne in Homer, sufficiently shew that Apelles or Zeuxis could not have painted more perceptibly

P A I N T I N G. 27

to the senses, as the coldness of snow, the sweetness of honey, yet he can fully express the thoughts and affections of the mind.

F A B R I N I.

THESE he can express by certain exterior acts; by knitting of the brow, wrinkling the forehead, and other signs by which he can convey the sensations, the sentiments, the emotions and operations of the mind so clearly, there is no need of Socrates' window.

A R E T I N.

'TIS so: whence we have in Petrarca this line:

E spesso ne la fronte il cor si legge.

And frequent in the face the soul appears.

ceptibly, or in a more lively or forcible manner to the eye, than these poets have done to the understanding.

The

The eyes are the principal inlets to the soul: by these alone the painter may discover and express * every passion, as joy, grief, fear, hope, and desire, in so perceptible a manner, and so forcibly, as shall be pleasing and satisfactory to the best judges.

FABRINI.

AND although the painter is defined a mute poet, and his pictures mute, yet his figures shall appear to speak, cry out, weep, laugh, &c. † insomuch as to produce the same effect in the spectator.

• Love, Hope, and Joy, fair Pleasure's smiling train,
Hate, Fear, and Grief, the family of Pain.

The lights and shades, whose well accorded strife
Gives all the strength and colour of our life. *Pope.*

† The Abbe Du Bos, in his admirable *Reflexions sur la Poësie & la Peinture*, has treated in a masterly manner this subject of the power of imitation, both in painting and poetry, upon the mind: And Quintilian, speaking of this power in painting, says,
“ Sic

A R E T I N.

IN appearance they do, though they neither speak nor produce the effects you mention.

F A B R I N I.

ON this I should be glad to hear your judicious friend Sylvester, the excellent musician, and master of the band to the Doge, who designs and paints very well, and makes us feel, that the painted figures of good masters speak nearly as intelligibly as living ones.

A R E T I N.

THIS is to be ascribed to the imagination of the spectator, occasioned by the different attitudes of the figures, which

“ Sic in intimos penetret affectus, ut ipsam vim dicendi nonnunquam superare videatur. It so penetrates our inmost affections, that it sometimes seems to exceed the power of oratory.” *Ist.* l. ii. c. 3.

are

30 A DIALOGUE ON

are suited to such and such ends, and is not the property of painting.

FABRINI.

TRUE.

ARETIN.

THE business then of the painter is, to represent by his art objects with so exact a resemblance of nature, that they shall appear actually existing; and he who cannot produce this similitude, is no painter: on the other hand, he is the most excellent whose resemblances approach nearest to nature. When I shall have demonstrated to you that this perfection is more nearly attained by Sanzio* than by Buonarotti, what I have so often repeated will follow of course. Yet I do not mean by this to diminish the glory of Michael Angelo, or to aggrandise

* Raffaele Sanzio. Michael Angelo Buonarotti.

that

that of Raphael, which can neither be increased or diminished; but to comply with your request, and pay a proper tribute to truth, in defence of which I have* (to your knowledge) often exercised my oratory, regardless of this, that in the maintenance of truth we frequently incur hatred.

F A B R I N I.

THERE is none now to overhear us.

A R E T I N.

I wish there were many, as my subject is noble; and truth should be maintained to the utmost against all, when the end desired is not disputation, but improvement. If any one comparing Arif-

* Aretin is well known to have done this with such effect, as to have made all the European princes, and the Sophi of Persia, tributary to him, to avoid the severity of his censures.

totle with Plato, should determine in favour of one or the other, he could not be deemed invidious, after having allowed them both to be great philosophers, by esteeming one of them to be superior to the other. And now, in discoursing with you concerning two of the greatest masters in painting, though I prefer one to the other, the like apology ought to be admitted upon this subject. In treating farther upon this matter, I hope to touch upon some delicate niceties of the art, which may not only illustrate the subject, but, when collected together, and committed to writing, may be of use to many, who, notwithstanding they paint, yet having very little knowledge of the art, they through mere ignorance grow proud and severe on the works of others, esteeming painting an art easy of acquirement, and understood by every one, when in reality it is very difficult, and understood but by very few. This
may

may also have its use among those who write and study polite literature, from the great conformity there is between the painter and the author.

F A B R I N I:

FROM the familiarity between us, I take the liberty to desire you will deviate a little from the method you proposed, and now indulge me with your sentiments on the dignity of painting, as I do not well remember what I formerly read upon the subject, and as what I hear *vivâ voce* makes a much stronger impression upon me than any thing I read. And in the next place, I wish you would inform me, whether one who is not an artist, can form a proper and decisive judgment of painting? I have indeed an example in you, who never touched a pencil, that it is possible; but there only exists one Aretin. I urge this the more, as there are many who call themselves painters,

D

who

who affect to laugh when they hear of a man of learning treating of painting.

A R E T I N.

THESE are such as have no other property of a painter than the name; for had they the least spark of judgment, they would know that all writers are painters; that poetry, history, and, in short, every learned composition is painting: whence Petrarca calls Homer,

Primo pittor de le memorie antiche,

The first great painter of antiquity.

And now I am ready, Fabrini, to answer all your questions to the best of my abilities, having leisure, and as we shall be free from intruders, the greatest part of the city being employed in seeing the preparations for the reception of the * queen

* Bonna Sforza, daughter of Galeazzo Sforza, Duke of Milan, and Isabel of Aragon, wife of Sigismund I. She arrived at Venice in the year 1555, where she died in 1558. Vid. *L'Advent. Dict. Hist.*
of

of Poland, whose arrival here is hourly expected. Judgment is derived from our perceptions, and comparing our ideas one with the other; and as nothing is more familiar to man than the observation of man, therefore every one whose attention is awake, is capable of judging of that which he sees every day; for instance, the beauty or deformity of any particular person or object. Beauty consists of a suitable and harmonious proportion and agreement, which prevails throughout the whole of an object, and between all its parts: the contrary arises from disproportion. Nature, which constitutes beauty, is ever correct, unless distorted by violence or accident; and the man who cannot or does not distinguish beauty from deformity, must either be blind, or inattentive to an inexcusable degree. On the contrary, he who observes Nature most accurately, is the best judge of what consti-

36 A DIALOGUE ON

tutes perfect beauty, and also of the imitative arts*.

* The *belle idee*, or *idea vera*, of which we have no expressive phrase, is that idea which is formed from an assemblage of the choicest beauties of Nature, or select members or parts that are most exquisitely beautiful, composing one whole, but which rarely, if ever, meet in one person or other object. None but those who are happily possessed of true genius, and the finest and most correct imagination, and are perfect masters of, and enthusiasts in the art of composition, and expression of beauty, can conceive and express this idea. Aristænetus, after having, in his hyperbolic raptures, described his mistress, concludes with this expression ; *ἠδιδυμένη μὲν εὐπρόσωπον ταῖς· ἠδύς τε δὲ ὅλην ἀπρόσωπον φαιμένης* ; which, as Mr. Addison justly remarks, acquires new beauty in the Latin translation : “ *Induitur, formosa est ; exuitur, ipse forma :—Cloathed, she is beautiful ; naked, Beauty itself.*”

Zeuxis, in painting his incomparable Helen, is said to have chosen five of the most beautiful women of Greece, and, selecting from each of them such parts as the nearest approached to perfection, produced one perfect form. Xenophon (*Mem.* lib. iii. cap. 10.) mentions this as a general practice of the Greek

F A B R I N I.

THE painters may answer, They don't deny, that as Nature hath placed in all men a certain knowledge of good and evil, so she has also of beauty and deformity; but as to distinguish clearly what is good or evil, is a matter of science and learning, so in like manner to judge determinately of beauty and deformity, requires great discernment, and an exactitude of judgment, which is the proper province of the artist.

A R E T I N.

THIS argument is by no means conclusive. The eye cannot be deceived in seeing, unless it has some impediment: whereas the understanding is often greatly

Greek artists. Among the poets, Ariosto has probably approached the nearest to the *belle idee*, in his description of Alcina. *Orl. Fur.* canto vii. st. 11. &c.

D 3 deceived,

38 A DIALOGUE ON

deceived, being obscured by ignorance or affectation. Man naturally desires good, but may err in his choice, esteeming that good which is really evil; as He does, who is more ready to follow what he thinks profitable, than that which he thinks honest.

FABRINI.

THE same may be said of the eye, which being deceived by appearances, frequently mistakes deformity for beauty, and beauty for deformity.

ARETIN.

I AM still clearly of opinion, that the understanding is much easier deceived than the eye. However, this is certain, that as there are the faculties of knowledge naturally implanted in the minds of all men, and a capacity of distinguishing between good and evil, so there is also of beauty and deformity; and many
there

there are among the unlearned who judge correctly. The multitude generally fix the reputation of poets, orators, comedians, musicians, and more especially of painters: whence Cicero observed, that however great the difference was between the learned and the ignorant, they did not differ widely in judgment. It is well known that Apelles used to expose his pictures to the criticism of the common people *; and there is no doubt but men of superior talents who have refined their judgments by attention to the subject, and the study of polite lite-

* A singular instance is handed down to us, of a cobbler's having criticised upon a shoe in one of Apelles' pictures; he altered it accordingly. The cobbler, proud of such deference being paid to his judgment, ventured to find fault with some other parts of the picture; upon which Apelles is said to have reproved him by a Greek proverb, of the same purport with the Latin, "Ne sutor ultra crepidam," and the homely English one, "Let not the cobbler go beyond his last."

rature, may pronounce decisively upon the liberal arts, and especially upon painting. Aristotle wrote upon poetry, yet was no poet ; also of rhetoric, yet was no orator ; likewise upon animals, and upon various other subjects no way relative to his profession. Pliny also wrote of gems, of statues, and of painting, yet was neither a lapidary, statuary, or painter. I admit a painter may determine upon some minutiae in the execution or manual performance of a picture, which another person who is not an artist cannot so well judge of : but these, though they may be of consequence to the performance of the work, yet are of none, in forming a proper judgment of its merit as a picture. And from what has been said, I think we may safely conclude, that any man of good natural abilities and nice discernment is sufficiently qualified to judge compleatly of painting ; and the more especially if he

is familiar with the remains of antiquity, and the works of the best masters; from whence he will have an idea of perfection in the art, and be the better enabled to judge how far the work before him approaches to, or deviates from, perfection.

F A B R I N I.

THIS is quite clear and satisfactory to me. Now favour me, if you please, with your sentiments on the dignity of painting, since there are some men who rank it very low, esteeming it a mere mechanic art.

A R E T I N.

THESE men, Fabrini, do not know how useful, how necessary, and how ornamental it is to the world in general: and the more useful any art is, and the more it is esteemed and encouraged by men of enlarged minds and elegant abilities,

lities, the more noble it is. Now it is well known that painting hath been highly esteemed by the greatest men in all ages, by kings, emperors, and other illustrious and wise personages, of which innumerable instances might be given from Pliny and other authors; who among other things mention, that Alexander the Great so much admired the excellence of Apelles in this art, that he not only loaded him with presents, but even gave him his best beloved Campaspe*, upon knowing that Apelles, in drawing her naked, had fallen most violently in love with her; a liberality far exceeding any pecuniary or other gift, as the difficulty of parting with the first

* “Tanto favore complexus ut delectissimam pellicum amore ejus deperire sentiens artificem dono dederit.” *Sup. to Q. Curtius*, b. ii. c. 6. Frensheim relates this from *Albian*, who calls her *Pancasta*, and says, she was the first mistress Alexander had. Vide *Ælian Hist. var.* b. xii. c. 34.

and

and most beautiful object of his affections, must be incomparably greater in him, than the giving away a kingdom.

F A B R I N I.

BUT alas! there are now no Alexanders.

A R E T I N.

AFTER this he commanded that none should presume to paint his person but Apelles, with whom, as well as with his art, he was so much delighted, that he was frequently known to spend many hours together in private conversation with him, in studying design, and seeing him paint*. This was he who, after having been instructed in philosophy by

* " Per eos dies dum Ephesi commoratur Alexander, ut ex instantibus curis recrearet animum, frequenter in officinam Apellis ventitavit, a quo uno effigiem suam penicillo exprimi volebat." *Sup. to 2. Curtius, b. ii. c. 6.*

Aristotle

Aristotle his master, placed all his glory in arms, and the conquest of the world. We also read, that Demetrius being encamped with a powerful army before Rhodes, which in a great measure lay at his mercy; though he was eager to make himself master of that city, yet seeing no other way of reducing the place, than by firing one side of the town, where a picture painted by Protogenes, which he had seen, was placed; he chose rather to decline the attack, than that the work of Protogenes should be burnt, esteeming a picture done by him * more than the glory of taking so noble a city.

F A B R I N I.

AN admirable testimony of respect to painting!

* The picture of Talyfus, which cost seven years study and labour. Apelles acknowledged Protogenes equal to himself, save that he often dispirited his pictures, by not knowing when to leave off.

A R E T I N.

A R E T I N.

THERE are many others.—Apelles being betrayed into the camp of a sovereign prince* whom he had offended, and being discovered approaching towards his tent, the king with a fierce countenance demanded of him, how he dared audaciously to come into his presence? Apelles looking round, and not perceiving the man who had betrayed him, took a crayon, and immediately designed his face upon the wall, and answered the king, “This is the man who brought me hither;” which was so strikingly like, that the king immediately knew him, and pardoned Apelles for the excellence of his art. It is worthy of remark also, that the noble family of the Fabii were surnamed PICTORES, from the great an-

* Ptolemy then king of Ægypt, who had been one of Alexander’s captains, and who afterwards treated Apelles with great distinction.

46 A DIALOGUE ON

cestor of the family having painted the Temple of Health at Rome.

FABRINI.

QUINTUS PEDIUS, nephew and joint heir of Cæsar with Octavius, afterwards surnamed Augustus, being born dumb, was taught painting by the advice of Messala the Orator, which Octavius approved, that wise emperor knowing, that next to polite literature, no art was so noble or expressive, or would so well supply the want of language. Many learned men have also been painters; as Pacuvius, the antient poet; Demosthenes, the prince of the Greek orators; and Metrodorus, the philosopher: our Dante also studied design.

ARETIN.

AND there are now in Venice Mons^{re} Barbaro, patriarch elect of Aquileia, a man of great worth and liberality, and the

the learned M. Francis Morosini, both of whom design and paint elegantly. And among the infinite number of gentlemen who study and delight in painting, is the magnificent M. Alexander Contarini, highly distinguished by his polite literature and great abilities. But in speaking farther upon the great munificence and liberality of princes who were lovers of the art, and of the high estimation painting was held in by them, what shall I say of Charles the Fifth, who, like Alexander the Great, was almost constantly engaged in tumults and wars; and like him also, was so great an admirer of this art, that hearing the fame of the divine Titian, he ordered him a thousand crowns for a picture which he painted for him at Bologna, and sent him kind and friendly invitations to his court, provided for him munificently, honoured him highly, and granted him great privi-

privileges *. Alphonso duke of Ferrara was also a great patron and encourager of this art, and gave Titian 300 crowns for his own portrait painted by him, of which Michael Angelo was so lavish of his praise, that in the warmth of his admiration of the picture, he said he could not have conceived the art capable of

* Titian painted three portraits of this emperor, who loved him so entirely, that he honoured him with knighthood, created him Count Palatine, made all his descendants gentlemen, assigned him a considerable pension out of the chamber of Naples, and frequently sent him large sums of money, which were always accompanied with this obliging testimony, "That his design was not to pay him the value of his pictures, because they were above any price." And one day taking up a pencil which fell from the hand of Titian, who was then drawing his picture, upon the compliment which Titian made him on the occasion, he said, "Titian has deserved to be served by Cæsar." This emperor adorned Spain with the noblest pictures that were then remaining in the world.

such

P A I N T I N G. 49

such perfection, and that Titian alone was worthy the name of a painter.

F A B R I N I.

CERTAINLY Titian's excellency was so great, that had the emperor Charles the Fifth and the Duke of Ferrara granted him far greater largesses, they would not have sufficiently rewarded his merit. But still M. Angelo stands unequalled.

A R E T I N.

PHILIP the Second of Spain, (the worthy son of so great a father) to whom Titian frequently sends his works, honours painting and this master so much, that I hope one day to hear of his granting him rewards worthy of so great a king, and the merit of so excellent a painter.

E

BOTH

BOTH these princes are said to have practised the art of painting. Eneas Vicus Parmegiano, (the unrivalled engraver of his time, and a most learned and subtle investigator of all matters relative to history; as appears by his Treatise upon medals, and his genealogy of the emperors) being a few years ago just returned from the emperor Charles the Fifth's court, told me, that when he presented the emperor with the engraving of his portrait, encircled with various ornaments, representing his great glory and enterprizes, the emperor took it in his hand, held it in a proper light at the window, examined it a long time very attentively, and ordered many prints should be taken of it (but which could not be done, as the plate was gilt); and again examining minutely the invention and design, gave proofs that his judgment was little inferior to a good artist's, and ordered Parmegiano two hundred crowns.

FABRINI.

F A B R I N I.

It is said of Julius Cæsar, that he was a great admirer, and extremely fond of pictures and intaglios *. And I have read in Suetonius, that even *Nero* the emperor (though so savage in other respects) designed, and executed relievos with his own hand, to great perfection †.

A R E T I N.

THE emperor Adrian and Alexander Severus, son of Mammea, were also great admirers of painting. And if we consider the vast prices at which many pictures were sold, we shall find that

* Intaglios (or engravings) on precious stones are here meant.—The art of engraving on copper and other metals, now brought to great perfection, was invented by Mosò Finiguetzzi, a goldsmith, at Florence, in the 15th century; though some say in Flanders: but the former is the common opinion.

† In terra cotta.

some paintings have been thought almost inestimable. It is said, Tiberius paid for one picture sixty sesterces, which are equal to one hundred and fifty Roman pounds of silver; and that Attalus king of Pergamus bought a picture painted by Aristides the Theban, for which he paid him one hundred talents, equal to sixty thousand crowns sterling*.

* The subject of this picture was a sick man, according to Pliny's account; who relates that a Bacchus, also painted by Aristides, (who lived about 300 years before Christ) was taken by Mummius, at the siege of Corinth, which at the sale of the spoils was sold to Attalus also for 60,000 sesterces; from whence Mummius, supposing there was some charm or magic in the picture, took it again, and placed it in the temple of Ceres, at Rome. Vide *Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. xxxv. c. 8.*

Pliny says, Aristides was the first who expressed the movements of the soul in painting; and mentions other pictures of this master, particularly of a woman dying with a child at her breast. Vide *Pliny, lib. xxxv.* whose observations upon these pictures are cited by Du Bos, in his *Reflexions Critiques*, T. i. p. 393.

FABRINI.

F A B R I N I.

I have heard there were some painters (among whom Zeuxis is named) who, thinking they could not receive any return equal to the value of their works, made presents of them*.

A R E T I N.

PRINCES in our age are with-held from giving so liberally, however excellent such works might be : The like discouragement also happens to the honourable labours of the learned.

F A B R I N I.

This gave occasion to Martial's saying,
Sint Mecenate non deerunt Flacci Marones.
If gracious Heaven Mecenas's would give,
Virgils again and Horaces wou'd live. †

* Postea donare opera sua instituit, quod ea nullo satis digno pretio permutari posse dicerat. Pl. l. 35.

† Du Bos and Algarotti differ from Martial, and think, were such masters as Apelles and Zeuxis to arise

A R E T I N.

BESIDES what hath been said of the honour and rewards conferred upon Titian, the celebrated Leonardo da Vinci was also nobly rewarded, and highly honoured, by Philip duke of Milan, and that truly great and liberal monarch, Francis * king of France, in whose arms he died, very old †. Raphael was likewise ho-

in our age, Mecenas would not be wanting. The former carries this matter still farther, and is of opinion that no poverty, no distress, can curb genius; and that true genius will always make its way to be known, and encouraged by one means or other; and gives a notable instance in Correggio: yet experience proves it too true,

“ Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,

“ And waste its fragrance on the desert air.” *Gray.*

* Francis the First.

† Leonardo da Vinci died at Fontainebleau in 1520, aged 75 years. Francis is said to have been greatly affected by his death; and on being advised by his courtiers not to give way to his grief, answered, “ I can make a thousand of you, but God alone can make a painter.”

A like

noured and revered, and nobly rewarded by the popes Julius the Second and Leo the Tenth*; as M. Angelo was by them, and by Paul the Third; by whom Titian in like manner was highly distinguished, when he painted his portrait at Rome, and that inimitable nude for Cardinal Farnese, which Michael Angelo frequently beheld with rapture and astonishment. — Titian was afterwards

A like spirited answer was given by the emperor Charles the Fifth, to the principal Lords who composed his court, on shewing some jealousy upon the singular regard and preference he seemed to have for Titian; “That he could never want a court or courtiers, but he could not have Titian always with him.”

* Graham, in his Account of the most eminent Painters, says, “Raphael was beloved in the highest degree by the popes Julius the Second and Leo the Tenth; that he was admired and courted by all the princes and states of Europe; and particularly by Henry the Eighth, who would fain have obliged him to come to England.”

sought after by all the sovereign princes,
both Italian and German.

F A B R I N I.

PAINTERS have in all ages been justly esteemed, as surpassing other men, in attempting to imitate by their divine art the adorable works of God, the author of Nature, and the creator of all things; and representing them in so lively a manner as to seem real: whence the Greeks forbade the profession of it to slaves; and Aristotle distinguished it from the mechanic arts, and recommended, that there should be public academies established in every city for the instruction of youth in this noble art*.

* The 10th Chapter of Pliny's xxxvth Book contains an historical account of the progress of painting, and the honours which were paid to it; and we there find that it was not permitted to any but those of noble blood to profess it;—and that the painter himself was respected as a *common good to all the world*.

A R E T I N.

A R E T I N.

THUS far we have considered the high rank and esteem in which painting, and the most celebrated professors of the art, have been and still are held. Let us now consider how far painting and sculpture are useful, pleasing, and ornamental. There is no doubt but the representation of the history of our Saviour, and the mysteries of our holy religion and its professors, is of great benefit to the devout Christian, in awakening his imagination, fixing his attention, and raising his ideas to heaven*: and although some emperors prohibited the use of pictures or images in places of public worship, yet the

* Had the Roman church never imposed any higher veneration for pictures and images, than as memorials only of the persons and actions they represent, the Reformed churches would not have thought themselves under any necessity of banishing these sublime ornaments from all places of public worship.

use

use of them was approved by many popes in sacred councils ; and the Church declares those who refuse to use them, Hereticks. Images are not, as some say, the books of the ignorant ; but, like pleasing remembrancers, waken the mind to devotion.

INSTANCES are not wanting in history of most surprising effects produced by statues. Among others we are told, on Julius Cæsar's seeing in Spain a statue of Alexander the Great, he was moved by it to consider, that Alexander had almost conquered the world at his age, and that he himself had not yet performed one glorious action ; and so deeply affected by it, and the reflections it occasioned, that he wept ; and was so inflamed with the desire of immortality, that he immediately set about those glorious enterprizes by which he not only rivalled but surpassed Alexander. And Sallust takes notice, that Quintus Fabius and Publius Scipio
were

were used to say, when they beheld the statues of their ancestors, they found their whole souls blaze with ardor, and that the remembrance of their glorious deeds so far increased the flame, that it could not be allayed, until they had by their own prowess equalled at least the glories of their ancestors*. So the images of the best of men excite virtue and good actions.

PAINTING and design are also of great utility to princes and commanders, by delineating and shewing plans, views, and the situations of towns, and the strength

* Nam sæpe audiui Q. Maximum P. Scipionem præterea civitatis nostræ præclaros viros solitos ita dicere; cum majorum imagines intuerentur vehementissimè sibi animum ad virtutem accendi. Scilicet non ceram illam neque figuram tantam vim in sese habere; sed memoria rerum gestarum eam flammam, egregiis viris in pectore crescere, neque prius sedari, quàm virtus eorum famam atque gloriam adæquaverit. *In Epist. Jugurth. c. 4.*

of

60 A DIALOGUE ON

of their fortifications; and all impediments, obstructions, and difficulties that are to be surmounted, either in the approach or disposition of their armies, or in making an attack; as in these the painter, whose province is design, is their guide.

DESIGN is also of the greatest importance to the geographer and mariner, in the construction of maps and charts; also in geometry, in civil and military architecture, and every art and science whatever, and in promoting and embellishing the manual arts in particular.

FABRINI.

ALL this is undeniably true.

ARETIN.

THAT this is an ornamental and pleasing art, we might determine from what I have already said; yet I must add, there is nothing, except the amazing beauties

P A I N T I N G. 61

beauties of nature, that attracts the eye or engages the attention so much, or gives so many agreeable sensations. The value of gold and even the richest gems is greatly enhanced, if a cameo or intaglio, designed and executed by an ingenious artist, representing any elegant figure, is enchased or engraved upon it; and is so esteemed not only by the best judges, but by men in general, nay even by children, who will point out the figures, and express their admiration by sudden transports of pleasure.

F A B R I N I.

IN Castiglione's beautiful Latin elegy*, an instance is given of the same thing

* Uxori Hippolitæ.

" Sola tuos vultus referens Rafaelis imago

" Picta manu, curas allevat usque meas.

" Huic ego delicias facio, arrideoque jocosque

" Alloquor, et tanquam reddere verba queat

" Assensu, nutuque mihi sæpe illa videtur

" Dicere

62 A DIALOGUE ON

happening to his little children, on seeing his portrait painted by Raphael, which is now at Mantua, and is a work truly worthy of the master to whom it is ascribed.

A R E T I N.

AND who does not know how much painting contributes to the beauty and elegance, to the enriching, embellishing, and ornamenting palaces, and other noble edifices, though adorned with statues, busts, basso-relievos, and other ornaments of architecture, cabinets, glass mirrors, slabs, and tables of curious marble, porphyry, and other precious stones, Persian carpets, and other rich and elegant furniture? These appear as nothing without historical and other paintings and pictures of the best mas-

“ Dicere velle aliquid, et tua verba loqui.

“ Agnoscit, balboque patrem puer ore salutat,

“ Hoc solor, longos decipiorque dies.”

ters.

ters. And how easy is it to discover how much superior, and how far more pleasing, the grand fronts or façades of palaces are, when painted by the ablest hands, than those incrustèd with the richest marbles or porphyry, though variegated with veins of gold. The same may be said of churches and other public edifices ; for which reason the popes I have named as patrons of Raphael, employed Him in painting the hall and chambers of the palace above-mentioned, and Michael Angelo, in decorating the church of St. Peter and St. Paul at Rome. And for the same reason, the best masters of the time had before been ordered to decorate the Grand Council-Chamber with their paintings, to which were afterwards added two pictures by Titian ; and it is much to be wished he had executed the whole. Had it happily been so, it would now have been one of the most admirable and beautiful spectacles in Italy.

Italy. The same reason also prevailed, when George da Castelfranco was employed in adorning the German office; but that part which respects Mercery, was painted by Titian when yet a youth. Of this I shall take occasion, before I conclude, to speak farther, and only observe here, that the neighbouring *barbarous* and *infidel nations* are by their religion, the fountain of all their laws, customs, and manners, strictly forbid all representations of nature, whether by painting or sculpture, or any other device whatever*.

* There is nothing more to be lamented respecting the Arts, than that Greece, "to which we owe the production of taste," and where genius of every kind arrived at the highest degree of perfection; and that Rome, enriched with the spoils of the former; where the Arts, transplanted from their native soil, were cultivated with great care, and flourished for a considerable time; but the like original or pure native spirit being wanting, could never arrive there at the same degree of perfection; that the former

F A B R I N I.

I THINK, Aretin, you have fully delivered your sentiments on the utility and

mer more especially, and the latter as the receptacle of many of the best works of the Greek masters, and of many valuable productions of its own, should ever have been ravaged by barbarous nations, who thought it meritorious to destroy the noblest productions that human genius in the happiest regions of the world was capable of executing. And what is next to be lamented is, (which from physical causes hath been endeavoured to be accounted for) that true genius in the liberal arts (as well as the sciences and the art of government) hath hitherto been confined within very narrow bounds, and seems incapable of being extended much farther than that part of Europe and its confines which lies between 30 and 45 degrees of North latitude, or 52 at the most, and between 8 and 57 degrees East longitude; that it hath never extended its influence farther to the North, nor nearer than 25 degrees to the Line. Painting and sculpture have been so far from making any progress towards the North, that they have been neglected and even despised in proportion as we advance northward, to the 58th degree of North lati-

F

tude

dignity of painting, and the pleasure that must necessarily result from it : Pray now

tude only; insomuch “ that the most valuable pieces of Correggio served only for blinds to the windows of the royal stables at Stockholm.”—

“And tho’ the English climate hath been warm enough to produce a number of eminent men in most sciences and professions; and notwithstanding the great munificence of Henry the Eighth, Queen Elizabeth, and Charles the First during the first fifteen years of his reign, and the great value they had for pictures, and the encouragement given by Queen Elizabeth to all sorts of arts, during a reign of near fifty years; and although it is acknowledged by foreigners, that there are no workmen in the world that have greater beauty in the execution than the English, or know better how to manage their tools; and though England hath given to the world eminent poets; yet it hath not produced painters who have been able to attain to that taste in design, which some foreign artists have brought over with them to England.”

The same hath been observed of France; that “ although Francis the First was one of the most zealous protectors that the arts and sciences could ever boast of, and notwithstanding the friendship and regard he shewed to Roux, to Andrea del Sarto, to Leonardo da Vinci, (who died in his arms) and to every

inform me how I, who am no painter, may acquire a competent knowledge, so as to form a proper judgment of the art.

every one that was illustrious for talent or merit, and the profusion with which he paid for the pictures he ordered to be painted for him by Raphael: and though his liberality and kind reception drew numbers of eminent men into France, and his bounties were bestowed continually on the professors of this art during a reign of thirty-three years; yet they could never form an eminent painter among his own subjects." *Vide Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks, translated from the German original of the Abbé Winkelmann, p. 1, 2. and Du Bos's Reflexions Critiques sur la Poésie & la Peinture.*

"Different ideas are like plants and flowers, which do not grow alike in all kinds of climates; and 'tis absolutely certain, that the difference of climates which shews itself sensibly in the plants, must extend itself likewise to the brain, and be productive there of some effects or other." *Fontenelle's Digression upon the Antients.*

But notwithstanding the above observations upon the climates, of England and France, and the seeming discouragements to the artists of London and Paris in particular, yet since the time Du Bos speaks of, France hath produced many eminent masters both

A R E T I N.

I MIGHT have extended what I have already treated upon to a much greater

in painting and sculpture ; among whom the most eminent painters were, Nicholas Pouffin, born in Normandy, in 1599, who was the pupil of his own genius, which he perfected at Rome, and was the greatest painter in Europe in his time. Eustachius Le Sueur, born at Paris, in 1627, was an excellent painter, and had carried his art to the highest degree of perfection when he died, aged 38 years, in 1655. Charles Le Brun, born at Paris, in 1619, whose painting of the *Family of Darius*, which is at Versailles, is not surpassed by the colouring of the picture of Paul Veronese, which is placed over-against it ; but is greatly superior to it in design, composition, dignity, expression, and the justness of the *costume*. The prints from his pictures of the *Battles of Alexander*, are even more esteemed than the *Battles of Constantine*, by Raphael and Julio Romano. He died in 1690. Peter Maignard, John Baptist Santorini, Bon Bologne, Rigaut, and Le Moine, whose composition of the Apotheosis of Hercules, in the saloon of Hercules at Versailles, is highly esteemed, and is thought equal, if not superior, to the composition of the best masters France ever produced.

Sculp.

length; but what I have said may suffice :
I shall therefore now proceed in the man-
ner proposed.

Sculpture was also brought to great perfection under Lewis XIV. The most eminent were, James Sarasin, born in 1598, who executed many excellent pieces of sculpture at Rome, for Clement the Eighth, and finished others at Paris with the same success. He died in 1660. Peter Puget, born in 1662, who was an architect, a sculptor, and a painter, and died in 1692. Francis Girardon, born in 1627, in his *Battles of Apollo*, at Versailles, and the *Tomb of Cardinal Richelieu*, in the church of the Sorbonne, at Paris, hath equalled the finest remains of antiquity. He died in 1715. And Le Gros and Theodon, who adorned Italy with their works. Vide *Voltaire's Siecle Louis XIV.* b. ii.

It is very remarkable also, that even in countries capable of inspiring every kind of genius, there have been barren ages, in which the liberal arts, and the genius that produced them, declined to such a degree, as to seem in the course of the next to be wholly lost.

History mentions only three *ages* in which they have arrived to a degree of perfection : That to

FABRINI.

YOUR disquisitions please me much; you treat your subject with order, precision, and great perspicuity.

which we owe their first rise, and commenced ten years before the reign of Philip, the father of Alexander the Great, in which they obtained their highest perfection; the age of Augustus; and that of Julius the Second and Leo the Tenth: unless that which commenced with Poussin, and continued to the end of the reign of Lewis XIV. be reckoned as a *fourth*, which it justly may, though not so general as any of the former. And we have reason now to flatter ourselves with the pleasing hope, that the reign of his present Majesty will be the *era* of the *fifth*, and distinguished by the *Age of George the Third*. True Genius in the liberal arts, seems now to have visited this island, and taken up her residence among us, which we apparently owe, and may justly be ascribed (physical causes, of which we can only judge by the effects, perhaps conspiring) to a *Liberal Society* formed among us *for the Encouragement of Arts*, and for other laudable and very valuable purposes, and the *patronage* and *munificence* of our truly amiable Monarch.

ARETIN.

A R E T I N.

I SHALL now consider painting under three distinct principal heads; invention, design, and colouring. Invention is the history or fable, and the order or disposition of the figures of a picture. Design is the contour or outline; the form, the attitudes and actions of the figures. Colouring is the natural distribution of the tints, or a faithful representation of the colours, and the lights and the shades, as they are painted and represented to us by nature, in a boundless variety of manners suitable to the subject, whether animate, inanimate, or vegetable, and the infinite gradations and intermixtures between these. To these may be *added*, expression and grace, which respect the whole, and are the highest accomplishments of the art*.

* The young pupil in painting ought to be aware, that the excellencies of the art, in the several

But I will speak as a painter, not as a philosopher.

FABRINI.

You seem to me both the one and the other.

ARETIN.

I SHOULD be glad, was it really so. I shall proceed in the order I have mentioned, and begin with invention, in which order and propriety ought to be strictly observed. For instance, Christ, or St. Paul, preaching, are not to be painted naked, nor cloathed in a mean and ordinary habit, nor represented in any manner unsuitable or unbecoming the dignity and lustre of their characters;

branches into which it is divided, are unattainable, where genius, close attention, nice discernment, a fine imagination, a correct eye, and an accurate judgment, or any of these are wanting.

but

but from the gesture and the whole air of the person of Christ, to impress an idea of the most amiable, the most perfect of human beings; manifesting by his countenance and action, his universal benevolence and love to mankind, so far as the beams of Divinity, and the emanations of a perfect soul, can be expressed by the face of man; emitting a radiant glory around his head, reflected by the atmosphere on the faces, persons, and other objects immediately surrounding him, in a judicious and pleasing manner: and in the person and action of St. Paul, to express that dignity, that force, that divine energy, with which he was inspired, and was known to deliver himself. These are subjects that require the sublimest invention and expression that the most elevated imagination can conceive, and which none but a Raphael can execute.—It was said, and not without reason, to Donatello, who had

had made a wooden crucifix, that he had put a peasant upon the cross; although in modern times few have equalled, none surpassed Donatello in sculpture, M. Angelo excepted. So in the painting of Moses, the artist must represent in him the majesty of a sovereign, the dignity of a lawgiver, and the air of a commander. And on all occasions he must have a strict regard to the difference that distinguisheth man from man, and one nation from another, their different ranks, qualities, habits, arms, customs, and manners in different ages, points of time, and places. In painting one of Cæsar or Alexander's battles, it would be very improper to arm the soldiers according to the custom of the present times; or in a modern battle, to draw up the forces after the manner of the antients; as it would be ridiculous to paint Cæsar with a Turkish turban upon his head, or a cap like ours or those now worn at Venice.

FABRINI.

F A B R I N I.

I THINK propriety ought in all cases to be as strictly observed by authors, as by painters. Whence Horace takes notice, that it is very necessary in writing for the stage, to adapt the language of the speaker to the character he is to represent, and the difference that ought to be observed in the characters of Achilles, Orestes, Medea, and others *.

• Intererit multum, Davusne loquatur, an Eros ;
Maturusne senex, an adhuc florente juventâ
Fervidus ; an matrona potens, an sedula nutrix ;
Mercatorne vagus, cultorne virentis agelli ;
Colchus, an Assyrius ; Thebis nutritus, an Argis.

Aut famam sequere, aut sibi convenientia fingi,
Scriptor. Honoratum si fortè reponis Achillem ;
Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer,
Jura neget sibi nata, nihil non arroget armis.
Sit Medea ferox, invictaque ; flebilis Ino,
Perfidus Ixion, Io vaga, tristis Orestes.

Hor. in Arte Poet.

A R E T I N.

A R E T I N.

ALBERT DURER erred most extravagantly in this particular. Being a German, he frequently painted the mother of Christ, and the saints that accompanied her, in German habits; also the Jews with German faces, whiskers, strange hair-dresses, and the habits then worn in Germany. But of these improprieties I shall take farther notice when I come to the parallel between Raphael and Michael Angelo.

F A B R I N I.

I WISH, among such extravagancies, you would also mention such slighter errors as seem upon the confines of propriety and impropriety, which even great masters are sometimes too apt to fall into.

A R E T I N.

A R E T I N.

I SHALL: but notwithstanding what I have said of Albert Durer, he was an able painter, and a great master of invention. Had he been born and educated in Italy, I am inclined to think he would have been inferior to none. As a testimony of his great merit, Raphael himself acknowledged it, placed several of his pictures in his study, and esteemed them very highly. Besides, his merit in engraving alone, was sufficient to make him immortal: his plates represent life so naturally, so accurately, and with such incomparable minuteness and precision, that his figures seem not only designed, but painted; and not painted only, but to live.

F A B R I N I.

I HAVE examined some of these plates of Albert Durer with amazement.

A R E T I N.

A R E T I N.

WHAT I have said of propriety of invention, may be sufficient for the present; and as to order, it is necessary the painter should arrange his subject, and pass from one thing to another in the order of history, so that the events may seem as if they could not have otherwise happened.

F A B R I N I.

ARISTOTLE in his Poetics hath given the same rule to the writers of tragedy and comedy.

A R E T I N.

TIMANTES, one of the most illustrious painters of antiquity, who painted Iphigenia, the daughter of Agamemnon, (of whose history Euripides composed that beautiful tragedy translated by Dolce, and represented at Venice a few years

years ago) placed her before the altar as a victim, ready to be offered a sacrifice to Diana; and having expressed in the countenances of the spectators, the violent emotions with which they were agitated, and finding himself unable to convey his idea of the complicated, and still more agonizing and variable emotions and agitations expressed in the countenance of Agamemnon the father, he caused him to cover his head with his mantle, as unable to behold the dreadful catastrophe of his daughter's death; and thus admirably preserved a propriety and decorum, which could have been no other way so well preserved or expressed.

F A B R I N I.

THE noble and natural simplicity of this invention was admirable, indeed*.

* The grief that does not speak
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart, and bids it
break. *Shakespeare.*
This

A R E T I N.

PARRHASIUS, another illustrious painter of the same age, made two figures that had been contending for victory, one of whom seemed to sweat, while the other appeared gasping for breath.

This thought of Timantes seems to have occurred at once, and to have been instantly adopted by the judgment; as the most beautiful and pathetic expressions in poetry are simple exclamations of joy and grief, that flow seemingly quicker than thought from the minds of the happy or afflicted; of which we have *many* instances in Shakespeare, the universal and unrivalled poet of Nature. Ross in Macbeth informs Macduff thus :

Your castle is surprized, your wife and babes
Savagely slaughtered.

The mind of the reader may bear the relation ; but the most obdurate heart cannot help being affected by the pathetic exclamations of the father ;

“ My children too !

—— He has no children !

All my pretty ones ! did you say all !

What all ?

These

These two examples may shew of what importance invention is to a painter; since all the excellence of design is derived from it*.

In invention, the painter should always, in the first place, carefully consider the nature and climate of the country where the scene or action he proposes to represent is known, supposed or feigned to have happened; whether fertile or barren; the nature of its productions, animal and vegetable; the natural appearances also of the country; whether mountainous or abounding in hills or plains, or whether a desert; or amply supplied with water, pouring down in torrents and broken cascades, or flowing

* Invention is to the painter, what the plot is to the writer: this once well formed, the work is above half done. When Menander was thus addressed by some of his friends, who said, "The feast of Bacchus is near; is your play ready?" he answered, "I have formed my plot; I have nothing to add but language and metre, and they will follow of course." *Plutarch.*

G

in

in rapid and transparent rivers and smaller streams, or gliding slowly in dull and ousley meanders. The nature also and character of the inhabitants, who in all countries are suited to the climate and the soil, and likewise to the structure of their buildings. And the more accurate the painter is in these respects, the more pleasing and learned he will appear. The least error against the Costume is seldom passed over without censure. Then what shall we say of the painter who presumed to represent the miracle of Moses striking the rock in the desert, and the plentiful gushing out of the water, to the great astonishment and relief of the half famished Jews, who, according to this man's representation, appeared to be placed in a fertile country, abounding with little hills and vales, with trees and plenty of herbage, where neither water nor fruits could be conceived to be wanting?

FABRINI.

F A B R I N I.

A PAINTER without genius, without learning and study, and a consummate knowledge of nature and of man, must ever be defective if not destitute of invention.

You remember how aptly Horace, addressing himself to the two Pisos, in the beginning of his Art of Poetry, speaking of invention, draws his similitude from Painting, the sister-art, as we before observed, of Poetry, and shews how far false taste and impropriety in invention might be carried. His words are these :

*Humano capiti cervicem Pictor equinam
Jungere si velit, & varias inducere plumas
Undique collatis membris, ut turpiter atrum
Desinat in piscem mulier formosa superne;
Spectatum admissi risum teneatis, amici?*

*Suppose a painter to a human head
Should join a horse's neck, and wildly spread*

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The

84 A DIALOGUE ON

*The varicus plumage of the feather'd kind
O'er limbs of different beasts absurdly join'd ;
Or if he gave to view a beauteous maid
Above the waist with every charm array'd,
Should a foul fish her lower parts infold,
Would you not laugh such pictures to behold ?*
Francis.

A R E T I N.

THE disposition of the figures in an historical work is still more essential, as the principal group ought to attract the eye so forcibly, as to engage the whole of your attention, till you have fully contemplated the composition, and the characters that compose it. On observing the works of the greatest masters, nothing seems more easy, and yet in the execution there is nothing so difficult. It is easy to say, the first characters of the history or fable ought to possess the place of the principal group; but the difficulty lies in distinguishing and preserving a proper pre-eminence and subordination

dination among these and the rest of the figures that compose the picture; and the difficulty will necessarily encrease in proportion to the number or multitude of the figures. For instance, suppose I was to endeavour to represent the miraculous fall of manna from Heaven, for the immediate relief and support of the desponding and almost expiring Jews in the desert; what a vast field would open here for invention, design, expression, and colouring? and how difficult it would be to preserve order and prevent confusion in so complicated a subject? The first thing required would be to describe the natural appearance of the place, and the whole face of the country; abounding with mutilated hills and rocks, and mountains at greater distances; an uncultivated soil, and, from its great exposure, the sterility of the ground, and the total deprivation of water, producing very little herbage, and at best, scatterings

only of native but abortive trees and plants, and miserable shrubs, without any traces of inhabitants, either man or beast, or even of fowls of the air.

AND in the next place to form a proper foreground, with a perspective view of the whole landscape in its native simplicity ; and then form a group of the principal figures, consisting of Moses their prophet, Aaron the high-priest, the chief of the elders, leaders, and captains, and ministers attending : also a proper distribution of other figures, expressing by their activity, and other signs, the eagerness and joy with which they gather the miraculous food. Some also employed in administering tender relief and comfort to the aged, the weak, and the infirm, who appear to be unable to assist themselves ; whilst others by various signs are devoutly returning thanks to God for their miraculous deliverance
from

from despair and death. Forming also a camp composed of tents, and miserable huts, from whence they may be supposed to have issued.

LIKEWISE other subordinate groups, and detached figures at proper heights, openings, and distances, suitable to the occasion, diminishing the figures and the action in proportion to the distances.

AT the same time distributing the lights and shades in such a manner as to shew the whole composition at once : but chiefly the principal and the most active figures cloathed and distinguished suitable to the dignity, the office, the rank, and the several qualities of the chiefs, according to the custom and manners of the Jewish nation. Also observing a proper union and subordination in the habits and appearances of

the rest. And in the first place expressing by the form, the gesture, and countenance of Moses, a sedate majesty and benignity, peculiarly becoming his character; a noble simplicity and devotion in that of Aaron; great gravity and intelligence in the countenances of the elders; an air of subordinate command in the leaders and captains; and a real or feigned respect and obsequious obedience in the ministers.

AND in the next place to express great penetration and judgment, and an unshaken fidelity and respect, in the countenances of many of the people; great sensibility and chastity of sentiment in others; an ungrateful, untoward, and perverse disposition in some; but an implicit submission and a perfect resignation in general, and inattention and inaction in all the rest; preserving a perfect

fect correspondency and harmony of design and colouring throughout the whole*.

ALL which order and decorum are faithfully observed by Raphael in his admirable picture of this subject.

BUT truth, which ought to prevail over all other considerations, obliges me to

* The harmony of painting requires, "That in whatever *key* the painter begins his piece, he should be sure to finish it in the same."

This regulation turns on the *principal figure*, or on the two or three which are *eminent*; for if the painter happens to give a certain height or richness of colouring to his principal figure, the rest must in proportion necessarily partake this Genius. But on the contrary, if the painter should have chanced to give a softer air, with more gentleness and simplicity of colouring, to his principal figure, the rest must bear a character proportionable, and appear in an extraordinary simplicity, that one and the same spirit may, without contest, reign through the whole of his design. *Shaft. on the Judgment of Hercules.*

acknow-

acknowledge, what I sincerely lament, that even Raphael, in a picture of his representing a scene in Rome of the excommunication pronounced by Pope Alexander against the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa, (and placed in the upper hall in the Pope's palace, near a battle painted by Titian) has, as I think, offended against the chastity of the Costume, by introducing therein a number of Venetian senators (who have no relation to the subject) as assisting, or as mere spectators only, on this solemn occasion*.

* Frederic Barbarossa succeeded his uncle Conrad the Third, in the Empire. He opposed three antipopes to Alexander the Third, took Milan in 1162, rased it to the ground, and sowed the site of the city with salt, for which Alexander excommunicated him. Frederic affected to laugh at this; but having lost a decisive battle between his and the pope's army, he at length solicited a reconciliation with him; and in August 1177, the pope being then at Venice absolved him. *L'Advocat. Di&. Hist.*

The

TITIAN, on the contrary, has in his picture, where the same Frederic humi-

The painter ought, at least, to have as strict a regard to the Costume, as the dramatic poet: then what should we think of the latter, if he should represent the treacherous murdering of Pompey on the sea-coast of Egypt, on one side of the stage, and the glorious fall of General Wolfe, in the service of his country, on the banks of St. Lawrence, in Canada, on the other? Yet many of the pictures even of great masters are nearly as offensive as such a scene would now be to us.

Algarotti mentions a picture of Tintoret, on the subject of the miraculous fall of manna, in the desert, wherein he represents the Israelites armed with fusils.

Roger of Brussels introduces a Roman Lictor with the Roman fasces, into his otherwise very valuable picture of the story of Zaleucus, the Locrian lawgiver.

And even Raphael (again) in his School of Athens, has brought together Aristotle, Plato, Dante, and Petrarca; but considering this as an allegorical picture, the seeming absurdity ceases.

Mr. Richardson, whose goodnature seems to prevail sometimes over his judgment, as is too often the case with goodnatured men, endeavours to defend
the

liates himself before the pope, judiciously introduced Bembo, Navagaro, and San-

the custom of introducing persons not contemporary, into the pictures of the Holy Family. He says, "We are not to suppose that these were intended for pure historical pictures, but only to express the attachment those saints or persons had for the Blessed Virgin." With this key, he thinks, "a great many seeming absurdities of good masters will be discovered to be none." (*Theory of Painting*, p. 105.) But this seeming apology can hardly be thought sufficient to justify St. Francis assisting at the birth of Christ;—or St. Jerome's instructing the Holy Infant, in the exquisite picture of Correggio, at Parma; — or Rubens, who hath introduced St. George, and other saints posterior in time to the Assumption, in his admirable picture of that subject; wherein he hath given his own portrait in the character of St. George; also those of his wife and children in the Virgin and her attendants. Nor can any apology be made for the strange mixture of Pagan allegories, and Christian characters, which frequently occur in the paintings of this master in the Luxembourg Gallery, especially in the picture of Mary of Medicis landing at Marseilles, where the allegorical figures are made so principal, that the historical persons are scarcely seen.

nazaro

nazaro as spectators, although the fact happened long after: yet there is no improbability in their being there at the time, and especially as two of them were Venetians, and the third so great an admirer of Venice, that in one of his epigrams he preferred it even to Rome itself*,

* Viderat Hadriacis Venetam Neptunus in
undis

Stare urbem et toto ponere jura mari:

Nunc mihi Tarpeias quantum vis Jupiter arcēs

Objice; et illa tui mœnia Martis ait:

Si Pelago Tybrim præfers, Urbem aspice
utramque

Illam Homines dices, hanc possuisse Deos.

In Adriatic waves, when Neptune saw
Fair Venice stand, and to the sea give law;
Boast thy Tarpeian towers, thy martial reign,
O Jove, he said: Thy Tyber to the main
Prefer: each city view, and own the odds:
That seems the work of men, and This of Gods.

Anonymus.

“ Of this epigram we have a beautiful translation in a sonnet by the ingenious Verdegotto, a valuable and truly amiable young man, well versed in polite literature,

there was no impropriety in introducing them. Besides, it was very desirable, and no more than might be reasonably expected, that one of the first painters should leave in some of his public works an idea of the faces and persons of three of the most illustrious poets of the age.

F A B R I N I.

THESE encomiums are great, and truly worthy of so noble a city.

A R E T I N.

THIS picture, had it no other excellence, would merit high applause from its exhibiting the portraits of three such eminent men, as we often esteem pictures

literature, a lover of the arts, and who amuses himself with designing, and paints very well."

Santeuil's well known epigram on the Seine, has been by some preferred to this; but I think unjustly, although it must be allowed to be very beautiful.

even

even of bad masters, for the sake of such representations only.

BUT I think nothing can be said in favour of Titian's judgment in painting St. Margaret riding upon a serpent.

F A B R I N I.

I HAVE not seen any of those pictures; but you have instructed me how to judge of them, and of invention in general, so fully, that I think I now perfectly understand the subject, and can only wish, in the next place, to be as well instructed how to judge of design.

A R E T I N.

I WILL give you all the assistance I can in that respect also: but before I proceed to that head, I think it would not be amiss to add something more to what I have said upon invention, that every figure should appear capable of performing

performing its office. For instance, if sitting, it should seem to sit conveniently and at ease; if standing, the feet should be firmly placed, and the body truly balanced; so that it may not seem in any danger of falling: and if moving, the attitude and seeming motion should be natural, easy, and graceful.

I THINK it necessary also to observe, that it is impossible for a painter, who is not well acquainted with history, and the fables of the poets, to be capable of fine invention.

If he is not learned, he ought at least to have a competent knowledge of these, of the liberal arts also, and of polite literature in general*, and to cultivate

* Du Fresnoy, according to De Piles's commentary upon these lines,

*Illæ quidem prius ingenuis instructa sororum
Artibus Aonidum,*

means

an acquaintance with eminent poets, and other learned men.

means to point out the assistance the painter receives from a knowledge of the Sciences and Belles Lettres.

He laments the fate of the Arts, which he thinks (through the ignorance of the generality of modern professors) are become illiberal and merely mechanic; recommends to all those who would make any proficiency in them, to read the best authors; and points out some that he thinks may be the most useful, to which, for the benefit of the unlearned, are added the names of the best translators, and several original works in English; viz. the Bible, Josephus (by Whiston); Livy's Roman History; the Roman History (by Hooke); Homer (by Pope); Virgil (by Dryden), particularly the *Æneis*; Godeau's Ecclesiastical History; Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (by Garth and others); Philostratus, Plutarch, Pausanias, (Potter's Grecian and Kennett's Roman Antiquities, Trajan's Pillar, Books of Medals); Perrier's Bas Reliefs, Horace's Art of Poetry (by Francis). To which Mr. Dryden adds Spenser, Milton, Tasso (by Hoole), and Polybius (by Hampton).

The painter may also find great use from Vasari, Baldanucci, and De Pile's Lives of the Painters; Du Fresnoy's Poem de Arte Graphica (called by Mr. Pope, "a small well-polished gem, the work of
H years),"

It is also advisable in him, as well as the poet, not to content himself with his

years)," with De Pile's Commentary, and Du Marfy's Latin Poem; Leonardo da Vinci; Lord Shaftesbury's Draught of the Judgment of Hercules; Algarotti and Webb on Painting; Du Bos's Critical Reflections on Poetry and Painting; Winkelman's Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks (by Fusseli); and his *Histoire de l'Art chez les Anciens*; Spence's *Polymetis and Criton*; Le Brun on the Passions; the *Admiranda*, and other collections of statues, pictures, and bas relievos at Rome, Florence, and other places in Italy, and elsewhere; the *Mythology of the Antients*, by Bannier, Montfaucon; the *Iconology of Ripa* (avoiding carefully his far-fetched Allegories and false Attributes); Higinus's *Fables*; *Practical Perspective*, by Brooke Taylor (enlarged by Kirby); Pliny's *Natural History*, by Holland, particularly Book xxxv. of which there is an excellent French paraphrase under the title of *Histoire de la Peinture ancienne*; Junius and Count Caylus on the Painting of the Antients (Note, The latter recommends the antient poets as most useful to the painter, in pointing out proper subjects, and the most interesting actions); John George Jacobi, *De Lectione Poetarum recentiorum Pictoribus commendanda*

first ideas or sketches of his design; but to consider his subject in every light that his imagination can furnish him with; and after he has coolly and patiently exercised the utmost of his abilities, and formed a number of designs, to suspend all farther consideration of the subject for some short time; and then, again and again, reconsider it, and review the several designs, varying them or beginning anew, as he shall see occasion; and at last prefer that which his judgment, and not his mere fancy or inclination, most approves.

RAPHAEL, who excelled all others in the knowledge of human nature and the

commendanda 1766, 4to. in answer to Count Caylus, wherein he instances a variety of subjects in modern poets, which he thinks ought not to be neglected.

This last work is by the authors of the *Bibliothèque des Sciences*, said to be "pleine d'esprit et de goût," filled with wit and taste. *Bib. des Sc. Mois d'Oct. Nov. Dec. 1767. p. 487.*

H 2

passions,



passions, and whose genius seemed capable of availing itself of every imaginable idea ; notwithstanding his great learning and abilities in all other respects relative to his profession, and his great experience, luxuriance of fancy, and facility of invention ; yet to all these high qualifications and admirable talents, he found it necessary to add intense study, and great application, insomuch that he constantly drew from four to six distinct sketches or designs of the history of a picture before he proceeded to the execution of it, in which he equally excelled.

IN what a contemptible light, therefore, must that man appear, who, without genius, learning, or abilities, shall vainly rank himself among the professors of this noble art ; like the man, who, in attempting to design and paint a beautiful

tiful vase, produced nothing better than a contemptible jar *.

F A B R I N I.

THE same thing happens in writing. From the want of words or proper abilities, men frequently sink into dryness or

Amphora cœpit
Institui; currente rotâ cur urceus exit?

Hor. Art. Poet. 21.

Why will you thus a mighty vase intend,
If in a worthless bowl your labours end?

Francis.

And with respect to authors he says,

Sumite materiam vestris, qui scribitis, æquam
Viribus; et versate diu, quid ferre recusent
Quid valeant humeri. Cui lecta potenter erit res,
Nec facundia deferet hunc, nec lucidus ordo.

De Arte Poeticâ, l. 38.

Examine well, ye writers, weigh with care
What suits your genius, what your strength can bear.
To him who shall a theme with judgment chuse,
Nor words nor method shall their aid refuse.

Francis.

obscurity, or express themselves quite foreign to their first intention*.

A R E T I N.

INVENTION, as I might at first have observed, takes its origin from two sources ; —the subject of the history, and the genius of the painter †.

* This remark every one must have made, especially the Poet, who often owes the origin of a second line to the finding a rhyme to the ending word or syllable of the former. To avoid this, and to preserve the verse entire, it is said a celebrated poet always wrote the second line first.—On the other hand, M. D'Alembert thinks this an advantage to an author. “ The obligation the poet is under to seek for expressions, often leads him to those that have the greatest beauty, which perhaps he otherwise would never have hit upon ; as Pride often induces a man to be pleased with expressions that first offer themselves to his pen.” *Reflections on El. and Style.*

† Genius and enthusiasm are equally necessary in the compositions of the painter and the poet.—The

IN

IN regard to the former, the painter should take especial care in an historical

sublime in painting and literary composition equally arise from the inward greatness of the soul of their author; whence Longinus calls it *μεγαλοφροσύνης απηχημα*, an image reflected from an elevation of genius which Heaven alone can give: And yet it is capable of being cultivated and improved by industry and application.

The following lines of Du Fresnoy on this subject are beautiful:

Ista labore gravi studio monitisque magistri
Ardua pars nequit addisci rarissima: namque
Ni prius æthereo rapuit quod ab axe Prometheus
Sit jubar infusum menti cum flamine vitæ,
Mortali haud cuivis divina hæc munera dantur,
Non uti *Dædaleam* licet omnibus ire *Corinthum*.

“ This part of painting, so rarely met with, is neither to be acquired by pains nor study, nor by precepts, or the dictates of a master. For they alone who have been inspired at their birth with some portion of that heavenly fire which was stolen by Prometheus, are capable of receiving so divine a present.” *Dryden*.

representation, which requires a great number of objects, to avoid confusion; but in general to chuse such subjects as require only a few*.

FABRINI.

ADVICE something like this is given in respect to poetical composition: In the dramatic, to introduce no more per-

Longinus, in speaking to the question whether the sublime was to be acquired by study, quotes a passage from Demosthenes: “ μέγιστον μὲν εἶναι τῶν ἀγαθῶν τὸ εὐτυχεῖν. δεύτερον δὲ καὶ ἔλαττον, τὸ εὐ βουλ εὐεσθαι, ὅπερ οἷς ἂν μὴ παρῇ συνανταίρει πάντως καὶ τρίτον.” Which he thus applies to his subject: “ τὰ τ’ αὖ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν λόγων εἰποιμεν ὡς ἡ μὲν φύσις τὴν τῆς εὐτυχίας τάξιν ἐπέχει ἡ τέχνη δὲ τὴν τῆς εὐβουλίας.”—The same may be said respecting painting.

* Lord Shaftesbury very judiciously observes, that “ the fewer the objects are, besides those which “ are absolutely necessary in a piece, the easier it is “ for the eye, by one simple act and in one view, “ to comprehend the *sum* or *whole*.” *Shaftesb. on the Judgment of Hercules.*

sons

sons than the drama necessarily requires; and in these and other compositions to observe this rule or maxim, That an animated subject extended to a great length becomes tiresome, and if too much contracted, despicable.

A R E T I N.

THERE are, no doubt, certain laws and regulations which both the painter and the poet ought invariably to observe: And yet there are doubtful cases, and some occasions where both the one and the other ought to indulge his genius, and take some licence*:

* Our author had evidently an eye here to the following rule, with the same restriction laid down by Horace:

Pictoribus atque Poetis
Quidlibet audendi semper fuit æqua potestas.

Painters and poets our indulgence claim;
Their daring equal, and their art the same.

But

But in nothing monstrous, or contrary to Nature; as the coupling together serpents with birds, or lambs with tigers; or any two things that are incongruous, or heterogeneous in their natures.

HAVING premised thus far, I shall now proceed in the manner you desired, and speak of Design.

By Design I mean the form or outlines, the attitudes and action of the

*Scimus, & hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim:
Sed non ut placidis coeant immitia, non ut
Serpentes avibus gementur, tigribus agni.*

A. P. l. 8.

I own th' indulgence—Such I give and take,
But not thro' Nature's sacred laws to break;
Monstrous, to mix the brutal and the kind,
Serpents with birds, and lambs with tigers join'd!"

Francis.

figures

figures of a picture, as I have already mentioned *:

IN this the painter is to take especial care to give easy and graceful attitudes,

* Design, in a larger and more comprehensive sense, is the executive part of Invention, and extends to every object in the composition; for which reason, Design is frequently used to express both the one and the other, without distinction, as Michael Angelo was said to form all Bastian's *Designs*.

The noble author just mentioned, in a preceding note, in defining what is meant by the word *Tablature* [or *Historical Picture*] says, "In painting we may give to any particular work the name of *Tablature*, when the work is in reality a *single piece*, comprehending in one *view*, and formed according to *one single* intelligence, meaning, or *design*; which constitutes a *real* WHOLE, by a mutual and necessary relation of its parts, the same as of the members in a natural body." *Shaftes. on the Judgment of Hercules.*

and

and proper and expressive action to all the figures; to draw the outlines of the body, and all its component parts, with the utmost accuracy and precision, giving them strength, energy, and force, according to the subject, or all the elegance and grace that can be found in the most perfect and beautiful nature; and not imitate, but correct and supply, any imperfections, disproportions, or defects, he may at any time observe or discover in nature.

For the least distortion, disproportion, or unnatural appearance, in the representation of any of his figures, would debase, if not totally destroy, the merit even of the finest invention.

It is confidently said, that Nature hath its defects; insomuch that not one human

human figure hath been found so perfectly beautiful as not to be defective in one part or other*. Upon this presumption, it is said that Zeuxis, in designing Helen, to be placed in the temple of the Crotonians, chose five of the most beautiful virgins that could be produced, and from these composed the figure of Helen, which was so perfectly beautiful that the fame of it hath been handed down through all ages to the present time. This may serve as an admonition to those who form their designs from their own imperfect ideas, or

* The truth of this observation entirely depends upon the experience and judgment of the observer, and the justness of his ideas, and may require much greater abilities, and a more competent knowledge of Nature, and in what true beauty, a just proportion and harmony, or perfection, consists, than man can be presumed to possess.

from

from *practice*, unassisted and unimproved by a close and constant attention to what may be found most perfect and beautiful in nature*.

AN excellent example is given by Ariosto, in his description of the beauty

* Raphael, in a Letter to his friend Count Balthazar Castiglione, concerning a Galatea he had painted for him, seems to lament the want of the best examples, which he esteems necessary, from the scarcity of fine women in his age and country. "Le dico bene che per dipingere una bella mi bisogneria veder piu belle con questa condizione che V S si trovasse meco a fare scelto del meglio. Ma essendo oggi carestia e di buoni Giudici e di belle Donne Io mi servo di certa *Idea* che mi viene alla mente."

"To paint a beauty, I ought to see many beauties, on condition you were with me to chuse the best; but there being at this time a scarcity both of good judges and fine women, I make use of a certain divine form or idea which presents itself to my imagination."

of

of Alcina the Enchantress, which evinces how justly good poets may be deemed painters. This description I shall ever retain, as an invaluable jewel, in the treasure of my memory.

XI.

*Di persona era tanto ben formata,
Quanto me' finger san Pittori industri;
Con bionda chioma, lunga, ed annodata;
Oro non è, che più risplenda e lustri.
Spargeasi per la guancia delicata
Misto color di rose, e di ligustri.
Di terso avorio era la fronte lieta,
Che lo spazio finia con giusta meta.*

XII.

*Sotto duo negri, e sottilissimi archi
Son duo negri occhi, anzi duo chiari soli;
Pietosi e riguardare, a mover parchi;
Intorno a cui par ch'Amor scherzi, e voli;
E ch' indi tutta la faretra scarchi;
E che visibilmente i cori involi.*

Quindi

*Quindi il naso per mezzo il viso scende,
Che non trova l'invidia, ove l'emende *.*

HIS idea of the nose he probably took from some celebrated Roman antique.

XIV.

*Bianca neve è il bel collo, e'l petto latte,
Il collo è tondo, il petto è colmo e largo;
Due pome acerbe, e pur d'avorio fatte
Vengono, e van, come onda al primo margo,*

XIII.

*Sotto quel sta, quasi fra due vallette,
La bocca sparfa di natio cinabro;
Quivi due filze son di perle elette,
Che chiude, ed apre un bello, et dolce labro;
Quindi escon le cortesi parolette
Da render molle ogni cor rozzo, e scabro;
Quivi si forma quel soave riso,
Ch' apre a sua posta in terra il paradiso.*

This stanza, which is full as beautiful as any of the preceding, or those that follow, is omitted in the original.

Quando

*Quando piacevole aura il mar combatte ;
 Non potria l'altre parti veder Argo :
 Ben si può giudicar che corrisponde ;
 A quel, ch' appar di fuor, quel che s' asconae.*

XV.

*Mastran le braccia sua misura giusta,
 E la candida man spesso si vede,
 Lunghezza alquanto, e di larghezza angusta,
 Dove nè nodo appar, nè vena eccede :
 Si vede al fin della persona angusta
 Il breve asciutto, e ritondetto piede :
 Gli angelici sembianti nati in cielo,
 Non si ponno celar sotto alcun velo *.*

Ariosto's *Orl. Fur.* c. vii. st. 11, &c.

* I am obliged for the following version of this elegant passage to Mr. Hoole, who is now preparing, for the Public, a complete translation of the Orlando Furioso.

*Her matchless person ev'ry charm combin'd,
 Form'd in th' idea of a painter's mind.
 Bound in a knot behind, her ringlets roll'd
 Down her fair neck, and shone like waving gold :
 Her blooming cheeks the blended tints disclose
 Of lilies damask'd with the blushing rose :*

I

Her

In regard to proportion, which consti-

Her forehead rising in proportion due,
 Like polish'd ivory struck th' admirer's view :
 Beneath two arching brows in splendor shone
 Her sparkling eyes, each eye a radiant sun !
 Here artful glances, winning looks appear,
 And wanton Cupid lies in ambush here :
 From hence he bends his bow, he points his dart,
 And hence he steals th' unwary gazer's heart.
 Her nose so truly shap'd, the faultless frame
 Nor envy can deface, nor art can blame.
 Her lips beneath, with pure vermillion bright,
 Present two rows of orient pearl to sight :
 Here those soft words are form'd, whose pow'r detains
 The firmest breast in Love's alluring chains :
 And here the smiles receive their infant birth,
 Whose charms disclose a paradise on earth.
 Her neck and breast were white as falling snows ;
 Round was her neck, and full her bosom rose.
 Firm as the budding fruit, with gentle swell,
 Each lovely breast alternate rose and fell.
 Thus on the margin of the peaceful seas,
 The waters heave before the fanning breeze.
 Not Argus' self her other charms could 'spy,
 So closely veil'd from ev'ry prying eye :
 Yet may we judge the graces she reveal'd
 Surpass'd not those which modesty conceal'd.

Her

tutes beauty as it respects the figure, the

Her arms well shap'd, and of a glossy hue,
With perfect beauty gratify'd the view :
Her taper fingers long and fair to see,
From ev'ry rising vein and swelling free ;
And from her vest below, with new delight,
Her slender foot attracts the lover's sight :
While vestments strive in vain each charm to hide,
Each angel charm, that seems to Heav'n ally'd.

This idea of beauty may justly be called (according to the French expression, for which we have no equivalent in English) the *Belle Idée*, as our author hath called Michael Angelo *L'Idea del Disegno*, the Idea of Design.

It would far exceed the bounds to which the translator is limited, to enter into the minutiae of what is thought to constitute Beauty ; but it may not be amiss to intrude some general observations respecting this head in particular, taken from the Notes on *Crito*, p. 16.

“ Felibien says, the *head* should be well rounded ; and look rather inclining to small than large.

“ The *forehead* white, smooth, and open (not with the hair growing down too deep upon it ;) neither flat nor prominent, but like the head, well rounded ; and rather small in proportion than large.

16 A DIALOGUE ON

most ingenious Ariosto refers to the best

“ The *hair*, either bright, black, or brown; not thin, but full and waving; and if it falls in moderate curls, the better. The black is particularly useful for setting off the whiteness of the neck and skin.

“ The *eyes*, black, chefnut, or blue; clear, bright, and lively; and rather large in proportion than small.

“ The *eyebrows*, well divided, rather full than thin; semicircular, and broader in the middle than at the ends; of a neat turn, but not formal.

“ The *cheeks* should not be wide; should have a degree of plumpness, with the red and white finely blended together; and should look firm and soft.

“ The *ear* should be rather small than large; well folded, and with an agreeable tinge of red.

“ The *nose* should be placed so as to divide the face into two equal parts; should be of a moderate size, strait, and well squared; though sometimes a little rising in the nose, which is but just perceivable, may give a very graceful look to it.

“ The *mouth* should be small; and the lips not of equal thickness: they should be well-turned, small rather than gross; soft, even to the eye; and with a living red in them. A truly pretty mouth is like a rose-bud that is beginning to blow.

“ The

that has been formed from observation

“ The *teeth* should be middle-sized, white, well-ranged, and even.

“ The *chin*, of a moderate size ; white, soft, and agreeably rounded.

“ The *neck* should be white, strait, and of a soft, easy, and flexible make, rather long than short ; less above, and encreasing gently toward the shoulders : the whiteness and delicacy of its skin should be continued, or rather go on improving, to the bosom.

“ The *skin* in general should be white, properly tinged with red ; with an apparent softness, and a look of thriving health in it.

“ The *shoulders* should be white, gently spread, and with a much softer appearance of strength, than in those of men.

“ The *arm* should be white, round, firm, and soft ; and more particularly so from the elbow to the hands.

“ The *hands* should unite insensibly with the arm ; just as it does in the statue of the *Venus of Medici*. They should be long, and delicate, and even the joints and nervous parts of them should be without either any hardness or dryness.

“ The *fingers* should be fine, long, round, and soft ; small, and lessening towards the tips of them : and the *nails* long, rounded at the ends, and pellucid.

by the hands of the most industrious

“ The *bosom* should be white, and charming ; and the breasts equal in roundness, whiteness, and firmness ; neither too much elevated, nor too much depressed ; rising gently, and very distinctly separated ; in one word, just like those of the *Venus of Medici*.

“ The *sides* should be long, and the hips wider than the shoulders ; and should turn off as they do in the same *Venus* ; and go down rounding, and lessening gradually to the knee.

“ The *knee* should be even, and well-rounded : the *legs* strait, but varied by a proper rounding of the more fleshy part of them ; and the *feet* finely turned, white, and little.”

Mr. Spence, in the excellent little work before mentioned, which is well worthy of being read and meditated upon by the English ladies, and will best supply what is here wanting, observes, that the modern dress which prevails in England hides and robs us of many beauties ; and gives an instance of a lady of his acquaintance, who had as fine a head and neck as could be conceived, without his knowing any thing of the matter, till he happened one morning to see her at her toilet before she was dressed. *Crito*, p. 18.

This

painters ; and uses the epithet *industrie* to

This must often happen to ladies who study Fashion instead of Nature, and Whim instead of Taste. Their minds are so taken up in devising or following a new mode of dress, that all proper consideration in respect to what is most suitable and becoming is totally neglected ; and thus Beauty itself is every day sacrificed to Whim and Caprice : Ladies of this turn must for ever continue insensible of their own perfections, on which alone they ought to set any value. The same thing frequently happens in painting, from the want of a proper idea of what is beautiful, and a due attention to what is most suitable, most becoming, and most graceful, and a harmony of colours ; for instead of symmetry and proportion in the outline, and ease and grace in the action, the figures are distorted or deformed, the attitudes unnatural, the draperies whimsical, tawdry, and extravagant, and no way suited to the character.

What a late writer, who hath given us ample proof of his diligence and ingenuity as an artist, says in regard to fashion in painting, may justly be applied, upon a better foundation, to fashion in dress. “ It is only by study, and meditating upon the works of the Italian masters, that we can reason-

point out what diligence is necessary in order to become a good painter.

ably expect to form a true taste, and to defend ourselves against the destructive and capricious forcery of Fashion; which changes almost with the seasons, and of which the most applauded and finest effects, in the space of a few years, generally appear to be what they really are, unnatural and ridiculous."

Now if the ladies would study their own natural perfections, and the best works of the Greek and Italian artists, and from thence form a just idea of what constitutes Beauty, and strictly observe propriety, simplicity, and elegance in dress, shew a due regard to the harmony of colours, and a proper sense of what is most suitable and becoming, every one would then appear to the highest advantage, both in their person and dress, and would be the admiration of the other sex, inspiring them at the same time with the like emulation of appearing also to the best advantage.

By these means the *Belle Idée* would be formed in the mind of every one who has an accurate judgment and a fine imagination, which, in the polite arts, is called Taste; and the English ladies would then become as celebrated throughout the world

In the place of *white*, Ariosto might

world for their natural and amiable appearance, and fine taste, as they now are very justly for the beauty of their persons and the fineness of their complexions, when undisguised by the fopperies of fashion.

From hence we may descend to some few particulars: That hoops, stays, and all violent bandages, ligatures, and other impediments, not only hide, but disfigure and deform, the beauty of their persons; to which may be ascribed the cause why painters, ever since the revival of the arts in the fifteenth century, have been obliged to have recourse to the finest productions of the Greek artists, who took their ideas and formed their designs from what they observed to be most perfect and most beautiful in Nature.

But at the same time we must acknowledge, that hoops and whalebone have of late given way to the most graceful and easy flowing robe that ingenuity ever invented or introduced into this kingdom, which hath been generally worn as a robe of distinction (notwithstanding the different implication of its name) in all polite assemblies, publick and private, giving way only occasionally to the more magnificent dress worn at court, and to convenience

have put *golden locks* *; *i. e.* resembling the colour of the purest gold. This I mention, as it brings to mind what I have read in Athenæus, that when the poets in describing Apollo use the epithet of *auricomus* (with golden locks), the painter is not to understand they mean, that the head of Apollo is to be adorned with locks of gold; nor can we suppose gold in any case proper to be introduced in painting, though frequently practised. Imitation, and the resemblances only of veniency on other occasions, and must ever continue so, or at least till something suited to a different mode of dress, still more graceful and becoming, shall be devised.

* Golden Locks hath been a favourite epithet in many ages and countries, particularly at the court of England in the days of Elizabeth, whose hair was of that colour, and of Charles the Second; this colour of the hair being esteemed most lovely and beautiful, as adding a lustre to the countenance, and harmonising best with a fine complexion, which those persons generally have whose hair is of this colour.

things,

things, and not the introduction of the things themselves, come within the province of painting*:

To give a very exact idea of beauty, would require great attention and labour; as, although it consists in proportion, yet proportion is itself various: Nature differing no less in the stature of men, than in the faces or mien. Thus we find some tall, others short, others middling; some fleshy,

* The absurd custom of using gold as a material, or as ornamental in painting, was not quite exploded in the time of our author. Some of the greatest masters of that age, even Raphael and Titian, in compliance with custom, and a false taste which still prevailed, were seduced sometimes, though but sparingly, to use it; but Albert Durer carried this absurdity to its height, in adorning the head of the Virgin, not with hair of the colour of gold, which would have been sufficiently absurd, but with wire of gold.

others

124 A DIALOGUE ON

others lean; some delicate, others nervous and robust.

F A B R I N I.

I SHOULD be much obliged, my friend, if you would here point out to me some rule whereby to ascertain the measure of the human body.

A R E T I N.

I WILL do it willingly, as it seems to me absurd for man to apply so much study to the measure of land, of the sea, and of the heavens, and none to the proportion of his own body. I say then, that nature having prudently placed the head, as it were the citadel of this wonderful fabric, which is called a microcosm, or little world, in the most elevated part of the body, all the parts of that body should take their measure from the head. The head (or, as we call it, the face) is divided into three parts; one
from

from the summit of the forehead, where the hair begins, to the eyebrow; the second, from the eyebrow to the extremity of the nostrils; the third, from the nostrils to the chin. The first is esteemed the seat of wisdom; the second of beauty; the third of goodness. * Ten times the length of the head, according to some, is the just height of the human body; according to others nine, some eight, nay, some even confine it to seven. The exact middle of his length is at the parts which distinguish the sexes. The eyebrows joined are equal to the circle of the eye. The semicircles of the ear should be as large as the mouth when open. The width of the nose over the mouth should be equal to the length of an eye. The

* De Piles, in his commentary on Du Fresnoy, has given a measurement in general agreeable to this of our author, and has noted the variations of the celebrated statues from it. "The Apollo and Venus of Medicis have more than ten faces."

nose

nose the length of a lip. The distance between the eyes equal to an eye. The distance of the ear from the nose equal to the length of the middle finger. The hand of the same length with the face. The arm twice and a half as thick as the thumb. The thigh once and a half as thick as the arm. As to length, I will speak more distinctly. From the summit of the head to the bottom of the nose is equal to one face. From thence to the forcular bone at the top of the breast, is a second; thence to the pit of the stomach the third; the fourth* is to the navel, and thence to the parts distinguishing the sexes, the fifth. This is exactly half of the body. Hence along the thigh to the knee is equal to two

* De Piles says, "The Apollo has a nose more;" and of the next division, "The Apollo has half a nose more. The half of the body of the Venus of Medicis is at the lower part of the belly. Albert used this division for women, and I believe it is better."

faces,

faces, and from the knee to the sole of the foot three. The arm contains three faces from the ligament at the shoulder, to the juncture of the hand. The distance from the heel to the instep is the same, as from thence to the extremity of the toes: and the size of the man measured round under the arms is exactly equal to half his length.

F A B R I N I.

THESE measures are of great importance to any one who would form a justly proportioned figure.

A R E T I N.

WHOEVER would do this should chuse the most perfect form he can find, and partly imitate nature, as Apelles did, who, when he painted his celebrated Venus emerging from the sea, (in praise of which Ovid says, that, if Apelles had not painted her, she would still have been

been immersed in the waves) drew her from Phryne, the most famous courtesan of the age; and Praxiteles also formed his statue of the Venus of Gnidus*, from the same model: Partly he should imitate the best marbles and bronzes† of the

* This was the more beautiful of this great artist's two statues of the goddess, which he had offered to the people of Cos to chuse of. The Coans, although the naked one was infinitely more beautiful, ("*immensa differentia fæmæ*," says Pliny) chose the one that was clothed, from a regard to the morals of their citizens. The Gnidians, not so delicate in this point, bought the naked one, which became the glory of their city, and wonder of the world. They refused to part with it to Nicomedes king of Bithynia, at an immense price, which he offered for it: "thinking, (says Rollin,) that it would dishonour and even impoverish them to sell for any price whatsoever, a statue which they considered as their glory and riches."

Vid. *Plin.* l. 36. c. 5. *Rollin on Arts and Sciences.*

† It has been the practice of all the greatest modern masters to study the remains of antiquity with the greatest attention. Michael Angelo was so fond

antient masters, the admirable perfection

fond of one broken statue, that it has from him been called Michael Angelo's School. Raphael is said to have collected vast quantities of medals, gems, bas relievos, &c. and some who pretend to know his private history, aver that he destroyed great numbers, after having made his use of them. The design of his Cartoon of Paul and Barnabas bears so strong a resemblance to a sacrifice in bas relief in the *Admiranda*, as to leave little doubt of the painter's having taken his idea from it. — To come nearer to our own time, Rubens published a little Latin treatise concerning the imitation of the antients; and in an extract from a MS of that master's quoted by De Piles, gives it as his opinion, *ad summam artis perfectionem esse necessariam earum (scilicet antiq.) intelligentiam imò imitacionem*; "that to attain the highest perfection of the art, not only an acquaintance with, but a thorough knowledge of the antique is necessary."

" Splendidior quippe ex illis affurgit imago,
Magnaque se rerum facies aperit meditati
Tunc nostri tenuem sæcli miserebere sortem,
Cum spes nulla fiet reditura equalis in ævum."

These lines shew Du Fresnoy's opinion upon this subject.

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of

of which, whoever can fully taste and possess, may safely correct many defects of Nature herself, and make his pictures universally pleasing and grateful. These contain all the perfection of the art, and may be properly proposed as examples of perfect beauty.

FABRINI.

It is very just that the antients, both Greeks and Romans, having obtained the pre-eminence in polite literature, should also obtain it in the arts of painting and sculpture, which approach the nearest to learning in value*.

* It may be observed, that those times which produced the greatest masters in the arts of painting and sculpture, have also excelled in polite literature. Phidias, Praxiteles, Parrhasius, Apelles, and Zeuxis, were contemporary with the greatest men and best writers of Greece, with Alexander, Socrates, Demosthenes, and Xenophon. The same age which produced Raphael, Titian, Michael Angelo, also boasted
of

A R E T I N.

PROPORTION being the principal foundation of design, he who best observes it, must always be the best master in this respect: and it being necessary to the forming of a perfect body, to copy not only nature but the antique, we must be careful that we do this with judgment, lest we should imitate the worst parts, whilst we think we are imitating the best. We have an instance of this, at present, in a painter, who having observed that the

of Ariosto, Bembo, &c. — Le Brun, whose fame has of all the modern painters most nearly approached to them, and Girardon, probably the greatest sculptor since the age of Clement VII. were contemporary with Racine, Corneille, Boileau, Moliere, and others the most celebrated writers of France. This may be ascribed to the strict connexion of the elegant arts among themselves; to the mutual assistance they give to each other; to the similarity of their nature, so that they all delight in the same climate; and to the temper and genius of their patrons, which forbade to divide arts so strongly united by nature.

antients, for the most part, designed their figures light and slender, by too strict an obedience to this custom, and exceeding the just bounds, has turned this, which is a beauty, into a very striking defect. Others have accustomed themselves in painting of heads (especially of women) to make long necks; having observed that the greatest part of the antique pictures of Roman ladies have long necks, and that short ones are generally ungraceful; but by giving into too great a liberty, have made that which was in their original pleasing, totally otherwise in the copy.

FABRINI.

THIS advice is certainly just.

ARETIN.

Now we come to consider man in two different ways, either naked or cloathed. If we represent him naked, we may do it after two different manners, muscular or delicate.

delicate. And here it is necessary that the painter preserve that propriety* which we treated of in speaking upon Invention. If he is to represent Sampson, he must not give him the softness and delicacy of Ganymede; nor, if he is to paint Ganymede, should he attempt to imitate the nerves and robustness of Sampson. So if he represents a child, he should give him the members of a child: an old man must not resemble a youth, nor a youth

* Beauty is absolute or relative. Absolute beauty is the perfect form which we know by no other term than the *Belle Idée*; but relative beauty consists entirely in propriety, and the consonance of parts to parts, and of parts to the whole. It is in this sense that the ingenious author of the *Theorie des Sentimens agréables*, says, “ La beauté se différencie
 “ suivant les différentes places que la Nature nous a
 “ assignées. Elle brille dans l’Hercule Farnese de
 “ même que dans la Venus de Medicis elle se mon-
 “ tre jusques sur le front austere et dans les rides du
 “ Moyse de Michel Ange. Il y a dans chaque age
 “ et dans chaque sexe une sorte de fleur attachée à
 “ toute conformation favorable.”

a child. The same propriety must be observed in a woman, distinguishing sex from sex, and age from age, and giving the characteristic marks by which they are distinguished from each other. Nor is it only to different kinds of persons that different figures and aspects belong, but even the same persons often vary according to the circumstances of time, place, &c. Thus Cæsar requires different appearances, being represented as consul, as a captain, and as emperor. So also in representing Hercules, the painter must conceive him in very different manners when fighting Antæus, bearing the heavens, embracing Dejanira, or when seeking for his Hylas. Yet all the attitudes and actions must preserve the characteristics of Hercules or of Cæsar, though circumstantially different. I must also enjoin, that there be no discordance in the same body; that is, that one part should not be fleshy, and another lean;

one

one part muscular, another delicate. It is true, where the figure is represented in any violent action, either as bearing a heavy load, or moving an arm, &c. it is necessary that the muscles should start out more in the part laden or extended, than in those parts which are at rest, but not to an improper degree.

F A B R I N I.

As you have divided the nude into muscular and delicate, I wish you would inform me which of the two is the more estimable.

A R E T I N.

I ESTEM the * delicate to be preferable to the muscular; and the reason is this:

* The beautiful is much more difficult to execute in a picture. The head of a delicate girl is much more difficult than the head of an old man; whatever is strongly marked being much easier represented than what is justly proportioned.

J. E.

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That

That it is a much more difficult art to represent flesh than bone ; for in the latter nothing more than hardness is necessary, but the former requires softness and elasticity, far the most difficult part of painting ; insomuch that very few painters ever knew, or do now know how to express it properly. He who seeks to shew the muscles minutely, attempts to place the bones in their proper places ; this is indeed praiseworthy : but he who paints the delicate*, marks the bones where they ought to be, but gives them a soft cover-

* It is a common error in painters to neglect the study of anatomy. By this neglect the bones of their robust figures are placed wrong, and those of the delicate totally omitted. Richardson justly directs the painter, — that neither must the naked be lost in the drapery, nor too conspicuous. — Algarotti lays down some rules how far the painter should prosecute the study of anatomy, and recommends to him a treatise on the subject by Bouchardon. — The short English work of Cheselden will be quite sufficient for his purpose.

ing

ing of flesh, and fills his nude with grace. If you say, that in painting the nude it is distinguishable whether the painter understands anatomy or no, (which is a very necessary part of the painter's knowledge, since without the bones he can neither form nor cloath the man with flesh) I answer, that the same may be known by the manner of shewing them when softened; and to conclude a genteel and delicate nude, is infinitely more pleasing to the eye than one which is robust and muscular. I refer you to the works of the antients, who used for the most part to make their figures extremely delicate.

F A B R I N I.

DELICACY of members more properly belongs to female than male figures.

A R E T I N.

You are right: I intimated the same when I said that care was to be taken not
to

to confound the sexes. Yet we find many men who are comparatively delicate, as in general are gentlemen, and all who are not used to labour; yet the delicacy of their members is very different from that of Ladies or Ganymedes. It is true, many painters give to their ignorance the name of delicacy; as there are many who, not knowing the position and conjunction of the bones, make scarce any * mark where they stand, but produce their figures by little more than the principal contours.

So, on the other hand, there are several who by making them muscular and strong, think to be esteemed Michael Angelo's in design, for which they are despised by all men of taste and judgment. As a

* Thus a virtuoso who was ignorant of anatomy, instructing a scholar, advised, "where you do not well know the muscle, make it soft." J. E.

painter

painter would be who should copy a beautiful member of a figure from the works of an antient painter or sculptor, or from those of Michael Angelo, Raphael, or Titian, or any other master, but not knowing how to introduce it properly, would give it as disagreeable an effect as an eye (though the most beautiful and elegant part of the body) would have joined to an ear, or placed in the middle of the forehead; it being absolutely necessary to the production of a good effect, that every part should not only be beautiful in itself, but also that it be properly applied.

F A B R I N I.

YOUR observation is very just.

A R E T I N.

THE next thing to be considered is Variety, which ought to be particularly attended to by the painter, as a part so
neces-

necessary, that without it even beauty and art become satiating. He should study to vary his heads, hands, feet, bodies, attitudes, and every part * of the human figure; considering that this is the greatest wonder in nature, that among so many millions of men, there are scarcely to be found two so much alike as not to differ very considerably from each other.

F A B R I N I.

CERTAINLY an artist who does not vary his figures, may with justice be said to be

* Non eadem formæ species non omnibus ætas,
Æqualis, similisque color crinesque figuris:
Nam, variis velut orta plagis, gens dispare vultu.

Du Fresnoy, l. 123.

As also of groupes.

Inque figurarum cumulis non omnibus idem
Corporis inflexus motusque, vel artubus omnes
Conversis pariter non connitantur eodem;
Sed quædam in diversa trahunt contraria membra,
Transversique aliis pugnent, et cætera frangant.

l. 137.

no

no painter. This will hold good also with regard to the poet.

A R E T I N.

BUT in this also we must advise him not to run into excess; as there are some painters who, when they have painted a youth, constantly place an old man beside him, or a child; or a young girl by an old woman: and having represented one face in profile, they place another in front, or with a side-face. If they have placed one man with his back toward the spectator, immediately they place another with his face, and so on*. I do not blame this variety; but I say, that the office of the painter being to imitate nature, it is

* These precepts are excellent, and were dictated by a consummate master in all the finenesses, and most delicate parts of the art. J. E.

I presume he means Raphael, from observations of whose collecting Dolce is said to have compiled this work.

not

not necessary that variety should seem to be studiously sought for, but obtained by chance. Besides, he ought sometimes to break in upon this order, and to make two or three of the same age or sex, or in the same attitude, so as he is but various in his faces, and properly diversifies the draperies.

FABRINI.

To the same purpose are those lines of the judicious Horace in his Poetics.

Qui variare cupit rem prodigaliter unam,
Delphinum silvis appingit, fluctibus aprum.

*“ He who tries
With ever varying wonders to surprise,
In the broad forest bids his dolphins play,
And paints his boars disporting in the sea.*

FRANCIS.”

ARETIN.

It remains to treat of Motion, a part extremely necessary, agreeable, and admirable ;

rable ; truly agreeable in itself, and wonderful to the eye of the spectators, to see motion as it were communicated to an inanimate form represented in stone, on canvas, or in wood. But this motion should not be continual, or in all the figures ; for men are not always in motion, nor so violent as to seem outrageous. The painter must temper, vary, and even sometimes leave his figures inactive, according to the difference and condition of the subjects ; an elegant position being frequently far more pleasing than a forced and ill-timed motion. It is necessary also that all the figures should be adapted to the performance of their respective offices, as I have already remarked with respect to invention.

Thus if one is to be drawing a sword, the motion of the arm must be bold and strong, and the hand must grasp the hilt with force proper for the action. So also
it

if a figure is running, every part of the body must appear adapted to the action of running. If it is cloathed, the wind must support the drapery in a proper manner. These considerations are very important, but enter not into the minds of the ignorant.

FABRINI.

WHOEVER will not adhere to these rules, ought to desist from painting.

ARETIN.

WE frequently see in pictures whole figures, or some parts of them foreshortened *. This should never be done

* Foreshortening should be admitted but seldom. Du Fresnoy reckons foreshortening among those things that are to be avoided by the painter :

*Difficiles fugito aspectus, contractaque visu
Membra sub ingrato, motusque, actusque coactos.*

“ Avoid all odd aspects or positions, and all ungraceful or forced actions and motions.” Shew no
parts

without great judgment and discretion. Indeed, foreshortenings ought, in my opinion, to be admitted but seldom, because the more rare they are, the more admiration they occasion; and especially when the painter, being confined with respect to room, by means of this art makes a large figure stand in a small space. Sometimes, indeed, he may use them to shew his knowledge of the art.

F A B R I N I.

I HAVE heard that foreshortening is one of the principal difficulties of the art; and therefore I thought that he who oftenest introduced it in his works, merited the most applause.

A R E T I N.

You must know, that the painter should not seek for praise from one part only,

parts which are unpleasing to the sight, as all foreshortenings naturally are.

DRYDEN.

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but

but from all those which absolutely relate to his art, and more particularly those which give the highest pleasure. Since the principal business of painting is to please, if this end is not obtained, the artist must remain obscure and unknown. I do not mean such pleasure as feeds the eyes of the vulgar, or such as strikes on the first sight of a picture, but such as encreases the oftener any one returns to observe it.— The same is true with respect to the works of good poets, who give the more pleasure the oftener they are read, and encrease the desire to read over again what has been read before. Foreshortening is understood by few only, for which reason it pleases only a few; and even to those who do understand it, it often appears rather wearisome* than pleasing. I can safely

* A figure to give pleasure must seem easy, otherwise the spectator feels a disagreeable sensation. This is far from being the case with foreshortened figures,

affirm, that when they are well done they deceive the sight of the spectator, who thinks that part which is not above a hand's length, is at its full proportion.

FOR example: Pliny says, that Apelles painted Alexander the Great, in the temple of Diana, at Ephesus, with a thunderbolt in his hand, where it appeared as if the finger was lifted up, and the bolt was thrown out from the picture. This effect Apelles could not have produced without the assistance of foreshortening. But my opinion is, that, for the reasons abovementioned, the painter should not studiously seek for occasions to foreshorten, but use them rarely, that they may not disturb the pleasure of the spectator.

figures, which generally appear uneasy. In that inestimable collection of pictures the Cartoons of Raphael, the picture which gives the least pleasure is the Draught of Fishes, and that probably because it has the most foreshortening in it.

FABRINI.

IF I was a painter, I should use them very frequently, hoping to receive more honour from that, than if I used them but seldom.

FABRINI.

You are free-born, and may dispose your works as you think most agreeable; but I assure you, a different course is necessary in order to be a masterly painter. One single figure well foreshortened shews that the painter, if he had pleased, could have foreshortened all the figures. As to the relievo which should be given to the figures, I shall speak of that when I come to treat of colouring.

FABRINI.

WITHOUT the assistance of this part, the figures appear as they really are, flat and painted.

ARETIN.

A R E T I N.

I HAVE made all the necessary remarks on the nude ; I shall now treat of the cloathed, but in few words, because, in obedience to propriety (as I observed before), the painter must conform in his habits to the customs of nations and conditions. Thus if a painter represents an Apostle, he must not put him in a short coat, nor represent a captain with a robe with long sleeves. As to the material of the draperies, the painter should have regard to their quality ; for the plaits in velvet are of one kind, those in armozeen of another, and both differ entirely from those of a thick cloth. It is necessary also to adapt the plaits to their right places, in such manner as to shew the form of what is under them *.

* This precept must be understood with moderation. Some painters, by a desire of shewing the figure under the drapery, have made it too obvious, and

They should turn in a proper and masterly manner, and not so that the drapery seem to adhere to the flesh. As too great scarcity of drapery makes the figure poor and ungraceful, so a great many plaits create confusion *, and consequently dis-

approached too nearly the manner of statuaries, who are necessitated to make their draperies very thin, that the work may not look heavy. But in painting the artist must consider the stuff. He will in general find it better to chuse those stuffs which will mark the form, than those which will not; as a slight silk in preference to a velvet, &c.

* The best painters have thrown the draperies generally into large plaits, with broad masses of light and shadow. According to the precepts of the best writers on the subject, this practice gives a greatness and dignity to the figure. We may see an instance of it in the celebrated picture of St. Peter preaching by Raphael, where the plaits of the draperies are few and large, especially in the Apostle's habit. Du Fresnoy has laid down the principal rules relative to draperies in these lines :

*Lati ampli ; sinus pannorum et nobilis ordo
Membra sequens, super latitantia, lumine et umbra
Exprimet;*

please the eye. It is necessary, therefore, to make use in this respect of that mean which is most to be commended in every thing.

F A B R I N I.

THE painter who cloaths his figures well, certainly deserves great praise.

*Exprimet ; ille licet transversus sæpe feratur
Et circumfusus pannorum porrigat extra
Membra sinus ; non contiguos, ipsisque figuræ
Partibus impressos, quasi pannus adhæreat illis ;
Sed modice expressos cum lumine servet et umbris.*

“ Let the Draperies be nobly spread upon the body ; let the folds be large, and let them follow the order of the parts, that they may be seen underneath by means of the lights and shadows, notwithstanding that the parts should be often traversed (or crossed) by the flowing of the folds, which loosely encompass them, without sitting too strait upon them ; but let them mark the parts which are under them, so as in some manner to distinguish them, by the judicious ordering of the lights and shadows.”

DRYDEN.

ARETIN.

I now proceed to consider Colouring; of the importance of which those painters are a sufficient example, who have deceived birds and horses.

FABRINI.

I DO not remember any instance of these deceits.

ARETIN.

It is well known that Zeuxis painted some grapes so extremely like nature, that the birds flew to them, taking them to be real: and Apelles having shewn several horses, painted by different masters, to some living ones, they stood quiet, without shewing any signs of knowing them to be horses; but presently on his shewing them a picture of his own, in which there was a horse painted by his own

own hand, the horses, immediately upon seeing it, began to neigh *.

F A B R I N I.

A NOBLE testimony of Apelles' excellence !

A R E T I N.

You must also have read that Parrhasius, contending with Zeuxis, exposed to

* These stories are handed down to us by Pliny (the xxxvth book of whose Natural History treats of the arts). — This picture of the Horse is said to have been done for a public *certamen* (dispute). The prize had nearly been adjudged to his rival ; on which says Pliny, “ ad mutos quadrupedes provocavit ab hominibus,” he appealed from men to the judgment of mute animals ; and having shewn the pictures to some horses, they gave testimony to the excellence of Apelles, by neighing when his was produced. This great painter not only enriched the world by the finest performances his art ever exhibited, but also by his writings, which were extant in the time of Pliny, but are since lost.

public

public view a painting in which nothing was represented but a curtain, which seemed to cover a picture, so extremely agreeable to truth in its representation, that Zeuxis frequently desired that it might be drawn aside, that he might see the picture, believing the curtain to be real : But afterwards discovering his error, acknowledged himself outdone, as he had only deceived birds, but Parrhasius had deceived him, the master who had painted the deception. Protogenes being desirous to represent the foam which frothed out from the mouth of a horse, which he had painted as fatigued and weary, after having attempted frequently to attain to the resemblance by changing his colours, at length despairing of it, threw the sponge with which he cleaned his pencils at the horse's mouth, and found chance had produced that effect which he could not obtain by his art.

FABRINI.

F A B R I N I.

THIS was no matter of praise to the painter, but to chance.

A R E T I N.

It serves to shew the vast care which the ancients employed that their works should imitate nature justly. And certainly colouring is of such importance and power, that when the painter imitates well the nature's teints and softness of the flesh, and adds the propriety of the several parts, his paintings seem alive, and as if nothing but breath was wanting to them. The principal part of colouring is the contrast between the light and shade, to which is added a middle tint, which unites and blends one extreme with the other, and makes the figures appear round, and more or less distant, as is required; for the painter must take care in the placing of them not to breed confusion.

confusion. In this part it is necessary also to have a thorough knowledge of perspective, to diminish those objects which are distant. But the painter must always keep an attentive eye upon the tints and softness of the flesh; for there are many who paint it so, that it appears like porphyry both in colour and hardness; and the shades are too strong, and end sometimes entirely black. Many make them too white, others too red. For my part, I would prefer brownness to an improper white; and would, for the most part, banish from my pictures the vermilion cheeks, and lips of coral, which make the faces look more like masks than nature. We read that a brown colouring was frequently used by Apelles; whence Propertius, in reprehending his Cynthia, who painted herself, says, he wishes she would shew that simplicity and purity of colouring which is seen in the paintings of Apelles. It is true, these

teints

teints ought to be varied, and the sexes, ages, and other circumstances of the figures, ought to be considered: Sexes, as in general the colour of the flesh of a young girl differs from that of a young man: Age, as the colour of the flesh of an old man or woman is again different from either of these: Circumstances, as the same colouring is not required in a peasant as in a gentleman.

F A B R I N I.

I THINK we have a notable instance of faulty colouring in a picture of Lorenzo Loto, which is in the Carmelite Church here in Venice.

A R E T I N.

THERE are not wanting examples of painters, who, if I was to mention it in their company, would treat me with ridicule. It is necessary that the colours should be tempered and united in such
a man.

a manner as to represent nature, and that nothing should remain offensive of the eye. Such are liny contours, which should be avoided, (as they are not so in Nature) and the blackness, which I have already remarked, of strong and disunited shades. These lights and shades judiciously placed make the figures appear round, and give them the relievo which is required; of which relievo those figures which are deprived, appear, as you justly observed, painted, because the superficies remains apparently plain. Whoever is master of this, is possessed of one of the most important parts of his art. But the greatest difficulty in colouring is the imitation of the carnations, and the variety of teints and softness. It is also necessary to know the colour of the draperies, silks, gold, &c. with such precision, that one may seem to see the hardness or softness more or less, according to the nature of the stuff; as also the shining
of

of arms, the darkness of night, the clearness of day, lightning, fire, water, earth, stones, grass, trees, leaves, flowers, fruits, houses, cots, animals, and other such things so perfectly, that they may all appear natural, and not satiate the eyes of the spectator. And let no one think the force of colouring consists in the choice of beautiful colours; as fine whites, beautiful azures, green, or the like, for these are equally beautiful before they are made use of; but in knowing how to manage them properly. I know a painter in this city who could imitate camblet perfectly well, but did not know how to cloath a naked figure; so that it always appeared not to be drapery, but a piece of camblet thrown upon the figure by chance. Others, on the contrary, do not know how to imitate the different tints of stuffs, but only place the colours full as they are; so that

160 A DIALOGUE ON

that in their works nothing is praise-worthy but the colours themselves.

FABRINI.

It appears to me, that in this a certain negligence is necessary, so that there may not be too studied a beauty of colouring, nor the figures too highly finished, but an agreeable temperance throughout. For there are some painters who finish their figures so very highly, that they appear painted; and with such exact dresses of the hair, that not a single one is out of its place. This is a fault, not a beauty; because it gives into affectation, which deprives every thing of grace. Whence the judicious Petrarch, speaking of the hair of his Laura, says,

*Negletto ad arte, e'nnanellato et birto :
In ortful negligence, with easy grace,
Her flowing hair in natural ringlets strays.*

In

In like manner Horace advises to banish from the poem all ambitious ornaments*.

A R E T I N.

It is above all things necessary to avoid too scrupulous diligence, which is hurtful in every work of art: whence Apelles (if I mistake not) used to say, that Protogenes was equal, or perhaps superior, to him in every part of painting; but that in one he (Apelles) excelled him, which was, that Protogenes never knew when to leave a picture.

* This precept may teach the painter to make a sparing use of gold, gems, &c. according to the words of our Poet:

Poets, like Painters, thus unskill'd to trace
The naked nature, and the living grace,
With gold and jewels cover every part,
And hide with ornaments their want of art.

To such a one Apelles said, "Although you could not make her (a Venus) beautiful, you was resolved to make her fine." "Ω μετρίκιον, ειπεν, μή δυνάμενος γράψαι καλὴν, πλεσίαν πεποιήκας." Vid. Cle. Alex. apud Junium.

M

FABRINI.

FABRINI.

THIS superabundant diligence is equally hurtful to writers; for wherever labour is discoverable, there necessarily is hardness and affectation, which is always wearisome to the reader.

ARETIN.

IN fine, there is another part necessary to a good painter, without which a picture becomes cold, and like a dead body which is totally inactive. This is, that the figures should affect the minds of the observers; some disturbing them*, others

* Omnis enim motus animi suum quemdam a naturâ habet vultum et sonum et gestum ——— hi sunt actori ut pictori expositi ad variandum colores.

CICERO.

Ἄρ' οὖν, ἔφη, γίνεται ἐν αἰθεράν πάποτε φιλοφρόνως καὶ τὸ ἐχθρῶς βλέπειν πρὸς τινος; Εμμεγε δοκεῖ ἔφη (Parrhasius) εὐκτα τὸ γε μμητὸν, ἐν τοῖς ὁμμασιν; καὶ μάλιστα, ἔφη. Ἐπὶ δὲ τοῖς τῶν φίλων ἀγαθοῖς καὶ τοῖς κακοῖς ὁμοίως σοὶ δοκῶσι ἔχειν

allaying that tumult ; some moving them to pity, others to disdain or wrath, according to the nature of the history represented * ; otherwise the painter may fairly conclude he has done nothing ; for this is the grand result of all his other excel-

ἔχει τὰ πρόσωπα, οἳ τε φροντίζοντες, καὶ οἱ μὴ ; Μὰ Δι' ὃ δῆτα, ἔφη. Ἐπὶ μὲν γὰρ τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς φαιδρῶι, ἐπὶ δὲ τοῖς κακοῖς σκυθρωποὶ γίνονται. Οὐκῆν, ἔφη καὶ ταῦτα δυνατὸν ἀπεικάζειν ; καὶ μάλα ἔφη.

Ἀλλὰ μὲν καὶ τὸ μεγαλοπρεπές τε καὶ εὐσεβές, καὶ τὸ ταπεινόν τε καὶ ἀνελούθετον, καὶ τὸ σωφρονητικόν τε καὶ φρόνημον, καὶ τὸ ὑβριστικόν τε καὶ ἀπειρέσιμον, καὶ διὰ τὰ πρόσωπα καὶ διὰ τῶν σκημάτων, καὶ ἰστώνων καὶ κινημένων ἀνθρώπων διαφαίνει. Ἀληθῆ λέγεις, ἔφη. Οὐκῆν καὶ ταῦτα μιμητά, καὶ μάλα ἔφη. Socrates apud Xenoph. Lib. 3. cap. 10.

* It is from a long observation of Nature, and the effects of the passions upon the face and gestures, that the painter must obtain the art of expressing them in painting, and producing them in the spectator. Every passion has (as Socrates observes to Parrhasius, in the passage quoted above) its proper mode of expression by the muscles, but more particularly by the eyes. Le Brun wrote a Treatise on the Passions, which can never be too much studied by the painter.

lencies. The same may be observed of the Poet, the Historian, and the Orator; for if what they write or recite wants this power, it is destitute of all life and spirit. Nor can the painter possibly affect others, unless before he begins his figures, he himself feels those * passions or affections

* I remember to have read (I think in Mr Addison) that Lully, the celebrated musical composer, could never compose till he had worked himself up into the passion he meant to communicate to others, of which he gives a remarkable instance.

The picture must receive the passion (as Lully's composition did) from the artist. The spectator must there see, as in a mirror, the soul of the artist represented, and by that medium receive the passion himself. This part is, as Dolce justly observes, necessary also for the poet, the historian, and the orator. Of its vast power in affecting the audience, there never were perhaps in any age or country more striking instances than in Mr. Garrick, and the late inimitable Mrs. Pritchard. The former (particularly for two or three of the last seasons) is so entirely the character he represents, that the mind feels every change of passion, and is drawn on by a pleasing violence

which he would impress on their minds. Hence our so often quoted Horace says, "If you would make me weep, you must first weep yourself†." It is impossible that any one with a cold hand should

lence to attribute reality to the well imitated scene. The latter probably felt more exquisitely, and communicated more justly the passions and affections intended to be moved by the author, than any performer that ever appeared on any stage. — She was so totally absorbed in her character, that without any impetuosity of action, or any stage arts, by the mere power of her own feelings and expression, she enchanted the soul, and bent it to her will with a more than magic skill. It gives the highest pleasure to be able, by this short digression, to pay a tribute for the pleasure the translator has received from two performers, one of whom we cannot prize too much, and the other whom we can never sufficiently lament —

—"Nil oriturum aliàs, nil ortum tale fatentes." HOR.

† —Si vis me flere, dolendum est

Primum ipsi tibi ; tunc tua me infortunia lædent,

Telephe, vel Peleu : malè si mandata loquëris,

Aut dormitabo, aut ridebo.

De A. P. 102.

burn what he touches *. Dante has ad-

* “ The expression of the passions in painting, (says an ingenious and judicious writer) is intimately connected with sensibility of soul, fidelity of organs, and precision of judgment.” (*Watelet Reflexions sur la Peinture.*) It must therefore be the result of a great number of qualifications given by nature, and improved by long study and attention. The student who would apply himself to painting, must examine very impartially whether he has such an accuracy of organ, and sensibility of soul, as are necessary for the clear perception of the objects around him, and to interest him in every event that occurs. If he is not possessed of these, he will very unjustly blame his fortune, or the partial taste of his countrymen, if he does not succeed. If he is possessed of them, he must apply himself with the most unwearied ardour to the observation of nature, study every muscle of the human face and body, and every turn they are capable of. The stage will be peculiarly useful to him; it is the best school for his observations, as the passions are exactly represented there as they proceed from a sensible mind. In capitals they are too much disguised by fashion, art, dissimulation, and affectation, to be perceived with certainty.

admi-

mirably included this excellence of the painter in these two lines :

*Morti li morti, e i vivi parean vivi,
Non vide, me' di me chi vide il vero.*

And since the arrival at the perfection of painting, to which so many concurrent abilities are necessary, is difficult and arduous, it is a favour which the liberality of heaven has conferred but on a few; for, in truth, it is necessary that the painter, as well as the poet, should be born so, and be the child of Nature. It is not to be credited, (as I have often observed) that there should be one only certain manner of painting well, because as the complexions and humours of men vary, so their manners must necessarily be different; and every one follows that to which he is naturally inclined. Hence different kinds of painters must necessarily arise; some who study to give pleasure; others terrible: some whose works are

tender and delicate ; others replete with grandeur and majesty. We may observe the same thing in historians, in poets, and in orators : but of this we shall speak a little farther in the course of our work. For the present, I shall proceed to the comparison, on account of which this discourse had its origin.

FABRINI.

I HAVE expected you to come to it some time.

ARETIN.

THE little which I have premised, is the sum of what relates to painting in general. If you are desirous to know farther particulars relative to the art, you may read the little book written by Leon Baptista Alberti, which is well translated (as are all his other works) by M. Lodovico Domenichi ; and also Vafari's

Vafari's book on the same subject*.

* The recommendation of these two writers, gives me an opportunity to advise every student in painting, to bestow a little of his leisure-time to the attainment of the Italian language, as he will find the authors who have written in it extremely useful to him, as he proceeds in his profession. The labours of the Sieur Veneroni and Mr Barette have rendered it an acquisition of great facility. The Italian writers excel as much in the theory, as their artists have done in the practice of painting. The *Lives of the Painters*, by Vafari and Baldanacci; the *Riposo di Raffaello Borghini*; the works of Zucchero, and almost numberless other authors upon the art, abound in observations which he will find daily useful in practice. The poets exceed probably those of any other nation in picturesque images and scenes; and although some of them have made their appearance in our language, yet there are many of the first rank left behind; in particular the profound Dante, whose ideas Michael Angelo found so congenial to his own, that he filled the margin of his copy of the *Inferno* with sketches of the scenes described by the poet.

FABRINI.

WHAT you have already said seems to me quite sufficient, not only for perfectly judging, but even for painting, all that remains consisting in exercise and practice. Among all that you have said, two things please me highly; the first, that pictures should affect the spectators; the other, that the painter must be born so: for we see many who have not been wanting in industry, and have wearied themselves long in drawing from relievos and from life, and yet could never exceed mediocrity. Others who have shewn the most promising beginnings for some time, and have exceeded their contemporaries under the conduct of Nature, being afterwards deserted by her have gone backwards, and succeeded in nothing. Whence one may justly apply to this purpose, these sententious lines of Ariosto, with the change of two words:

“ Sono

*Sono i poeti et i pittori pochi ;
Pittori che non sian del nome indegni.*

*Poets and painters few we justly name,
For few their honours can with justice claim.*

But with respect to affecting the passions,
I have seen few pictures here in Venice,
excepting those of Titian, which produce that effect.

A R E T I N.

UPON recollecting, therefore, all the parts which are required in a good painter, we shall find that Michael Angelo possesses one alone, Design; and that Raphael possesses them all, or at least (as a man cannot attain the independence of a God, to whom nothing is wanting) the greater part; and if he was deficient in any, it was such as was of little moment.

F A B R I N I.

To the proof.

A R E T I N.

A R E T I N.

FIRST, as to Invention, whoever pays good attention, and minutely considers the paintings of one and the other, will find Raphael to have most admirably observed every thing relative to this part, and Michael Angelo little or nothing.

F A B R I N I.

THIS seems to me a great partiality in the parallel.

A R E T I N.

I SAY nothing more than truth: Hear me with patience. To leave apart all that respects the History (in which Raphael imitated the writers in such a manner, that frequently the judgment of the observer is led to believe that the painter has represented things more justly in his pictures than they in their writings, or at least was on equal terms with them),

them), and proceeding to Propriety, from this Raphael never departed, but made his children really children *, that is soft and tender, his men robust, and his women with that delicacy which belongs to their sex.

* In his own time Titian far exceeded him in the tender, and afterwards Francis Du Quesnoi, surnamed the Fleming. J. E.

It seems odd the Italian editor should compare Fiamingo, who was a sculptor, to Michael Angelo, where he is spoken of as a painter. Fiamingo's principal excellence was in boys, and the delicate. He had the art of softening and vivifying his marble to a surprizing degree. In the cathedral church at Ghent, there is a monument done by him for Bishop Trieste, which is extremely fine: the weeping boys do not yield even to those on Cardinal Richlieu's monument at the Sorbonne. Winckelman says, Michael Angelo "attained the antique; but only in strong muscular figures, heroic frames; not in those of tender youth, nor in female bodies, which under his bold hand grew Amazons."

Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks, p. 23.

FABRINI.

FABRINI.

HAS not the great Michael Angelo also preserved this propriety?

ARETIN.

IF I would please you, and his other favourers, I should say yes; but if I am to speak truth, I must say no: for although we may observe in the pictures of Michael Angelo, the general distinctions of age and sex (which every painter knows), yet you cannot find it in the distribution of the muscles. I shall not stop to examine his particular works, both through the respect I bear him, and which ought to be had to such a man, as also because it is unnecessary. But what think you with regard to modesty? Does it appear to you proper that the painter, for the sake of shewing the difficulties of the art, should exhibit
what

what shame and modesty conceal, without any regard either to the sanctity of the persons whom he represents, or to the place where they are painted *?

* One great use of the polite arts is to soften the minds and purify the morals of mankind. — That painting in particular has had this effect, both in stimulating the mind to virtue, and deterring it from vice, history informs us. — But like those medicaments which when properly applied restore the constitution to, or preserve it in, health, yet when wrongly administered destroy it; so those arts which when applied to the cultivation of virtue, are most efficacious in purifying and exalting the mind, if they are wrenched to the purposes of vice, tend the most directly to sully and debase it to a rank below that of beasts. — Propertius says, to what purpose did they erect temples to Chastity in Rome, when private houses were permitted to contain inducements to vice? He elegantly exclaims against the pernicious custom:

Quæ manus obscenas depinxit prima tabellas,

Et posuit casta turpia visa domo:

Illæ puellarum ingenuos corrumpit ocellos,

Nequitæque suæ noluit esse rudes.

Ah

176 A DIALOGUE ON

FABRINI.

You are too rigid and scrupulous.

ARETIN.

Who will be daring enough to affirm that it is proper, that in Rome, in the church of St. Peter, the chief of the apostles; in Rome, where all the world assembles, in the chapel of that high priest, who (as Bembo says) is the representative of God upon earth, figures should be seen, who immodestly discover what decency conceals? A thing, in truth, (speaking with submission) utterly un-

Ah! gemat in terris ista qui protulit arte
Jurgia sub tacita condita lætitia.

He concludes, that the only security is in purity of mind; — that lost, no tie remains.

—nihil invitæ tristis custodia prodest
Quam peccare pudet Cynthia tuta sat est.

Eleg. lib. II. E. 5. ver. 219. &c.
worthy

worthy of that most holy place*. The laws prohibit the printing of immodest books: how much more should they prohibit such pictures †? Does it appear

* L'Abbe de Marfy, alluding to this picture of the Last Judgment, in his Latin Poem upon Painting, has the following beautiful lines.

Hinc adeo Italici culpata audacia quondam
Artificis, pingens qui mundi extrema ruentis
Funera, et ultrices venturi judicis iras,
Larvarum omnigenas species et ludicra miris
Induxit portenta modis, Stygiasque sorores,
Infernumque senem conto simulacra cientem.
Et vada cæruleis sulcantem livida remis.
Obscænas etiam effigies et lubrica passim
Objectare oculis monstra indignantibus ausus.
Horruit aspectu pietas, vestigia torfit
Religio, ingenuus deflexit lumina Candor,
Et Pudor averfos texit velamine vultus."

† According to Horace's observation :
Segniùs irritant animos demissa per aurem,
Quàm quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus ———

What we hear
With weaker passion will affect the heart,
Than when the faithful eye beholds the part.

A. P. 180.

N to

to you, that they excite the mind to devotion? or raise it to the contemplation of divine subjects? But let us yield to Michael Angelo on account of his great merit, what we should not allow to any one else *. But let us also freely speak truth: If that is not permitted, I would I had not said this, because I do not say it for the sake of carping at his merits, nor to make a vain parade of extraordinary knowledge.

F A B R I N I.

THE eyes of some persons, my friend, are uncorrupt and unoffended by seeing natural objects. Those which are infirm see nothing with a just mind; and you may with truth suppose, that if this were really so bad an example as you think it,

* Aretin might observe of Michael Angelo, as Pliny does of an antient artist, "*Fuit celebris nisi flagitio insigni corrupisset artem: He was famous, had he not corrupted his art by his excessive flagitiousness.*"

it

it would not be suffered. But as you weigh these things with the severity of a Socrates, I ask you, Whether you think that Raphael acted consistently with modesty when he designed, and caused to be engraved by Marc Antonio, those men and women in loose and immodest embraces?

A R E T I N.

I MIGHT answer to you, that Raphael was not the inventor of it, but Julio Romano, his disciple and heir. But allowing that he had designed the whole or part of it, he did not expose it in the public squares, or in the churches; but they came by chance into the hands of Marc Antonio, who for his own profit engraved them for Bavier; and Marc Antonio, if I had not interposed, would have met with a punishment from Pope Leo worthy his deserts*.

* This place deserves elucidation; for these designs (as appears from the best authorities) seem to have been made by J. Romano for Aretin. The

180 A DIALOGUE ON

FABRINI.

THIS is merely a covering of fine sugar over aloes.

ARETIN.

I DO not vary in the least from truth, nor is it utterly prohibited to the painter sometimes to do such things by way of pastime; as some of the antient poets trifled lasciviously for Mecenass's diversion upon the image of Priapus, to celebrate

verses under the above prints are written by him, and seem placed there to raise vicious ideas. And here Dolce makes him say, that if he had not used his interest in favour of Marc Antonio, he would have been punished. Among the Letters of Aretin, there is one directed to Clement the Seventh, which does not confirm what we find here. J. E.

Julio Romano would have been put to death by the Pope, if he had not fled to Mantua, according to Lamotte, as quoted by Beyer in his *Memorie*, *Lib. rar.* who informs us, that these Sonnets, sixteen in number, were translated into Latin by Bernh. Moneta, and added these lines under the head of Aretin:

Excudit Veneres Marcus quas Julius ante
Pinxerat: Hæc scribens vicit utrumque Petrus —
that

that minister's gardens*. But in public, especially in sacred places, and on divine subjects, modesty should always be regarded: and it would be much better that these figures had been more modest, even if they had been less perfect in design, than as we see them most perfect, but most immodest. But the virtuous Raphael always observed this modesty in all his works; insomuch that though he generally gave to his figures a soft and elegant air, which charmed and inflamed the mind; nevertheless, in the faces of his saints, and particularly of the Virgin Mother of our Lord, he always observed I know not what of sanctity and divinity, (and not only in the faces, but also in all their motions) which seems to repress every vicious thought in the spectator's mind. Wherefore in this part of invention, both with regard to the history and to propriety, Raphael is superior.

* To the great dishonour of himself and his art, Horace is among this number.

FABRINI.

I DO not know that Michael Angelo yields to Raphael for the composition of history; on the contrary, I hold the opposite opinion, that he far exceeds him. For I dare aver, that in the order of his stupendous Judgment many most profound allegorical sentiments are contained, which are understood by only a few.

ARETIN.

IN this he might merit praise, as imitating those great philosophers who hid under the veil of poetry the greatest mysteries of human and divine philosophy, that they might not be understood by the vulgar, because they would not cast their pearl before swine. And this I would believe to be the meaning of Michael Angelo, were there not some things

things in that Judgment quite ridiculous.

F A B R I N I.

WHAT are they ?

A R E T I N.

Is it not ridiculous to represent among the multitude of blessed souls in heaven, some tenderly kissing each other, when they ought to be intent, with their minds fixed in contemplation of the Divinity, and of the future sentence; especially in so terrible a day as we read and undoubtedly believe the day of judgment to be; of which holy scripture says, that it shall stupify death and nature, when all mankind shall arise, and give an account of their good and evil actions done in this life, to the External Judge of all thing: Besides, what mystical sense can be hidden by painting Christ beardless? or to see a Devil with his hand grasped

184 A DIALOGUE ON

round the thigh of a large figure which he is pulling down, and whose pain is so great, that he gnaws his finger? Do not for goodness-sake make me proceed farther on this subject, lest it should seem that I speak ill of a man by others esteemed divine*.

FABRINI.

I REPEAT to you that his invention is most ingenious, and understood by few.

ARETIN.

It does not appear to me very proper, that the eyes of children, of matrons, and

* Equally absurd are the allegorical figures of other masters. — The reader may see the absurdities of Ripa, Otho Venius, and Rubens, pointed out in Mr. Spence's *Polymetis*. That excellent judge says, "Even Raphael himself, the divine Raphael, is not without faults in the allegorical part of his painting."

Vide *Polymetis*, p. 293. &c. fol. 1747.
of

of virgins, should openly behold those immodest parts which they discover; and that the learned alone should understand that depth of allegory which they conceal. But I may say of him what a learned and holy man is reported to have said of Persius the satiric poet, who is beyond all measure obscure: "If you are not willing to be understood, neither will I understand you;" and with these words threw his book into the fire, making him a proper sacrifice to Vulcan. So I may say, that since Michael Angelo is not desirous that his inventions should be understood by any except the few learned; I, who am not one of those few learned, shall leave his thoughts to himself. We have considered Michael Angelo in sacred history: Let us a little consider Raphael in profane; for when we find him most accurate and modest in this, we may conceive that he is not less so in the other.

FABRINI.

FABRINI.

I HEAR you.

ARETIN.

I DO not know whether you have seen at our friend Dolce's, the picture of Roxana painted by Raphael, which has been since engraved on copper.

FABRINI.

I DO not remember it.

ARETIN.

It is a picture in which is represented the coronation of Roxana, who being a most beautiful woman, was much beloved by Alexander the Great. Alexander is likewise represented in the picture standing near Roxana, and presenting the crown to her; and she sits on one side of a bed in a timid and reverential attitude,

attitude, entirely naked, except that, for the sake of modesty, a slight drapery is thrown over her*. It is impossible to conceive an air more gentle, or a body more delicate, with a proper fulness of flesh, and a stature not too long, but with an agreeable ease. There is a naked boy with wings undressing her feet; another above arranges her hair: a little farther off there is a youth entirely naked, who points out Roxana to Alexander with his finger, as inviting him to the sacrifices of Venus or Juno; and also a man bearing a torch. In another part there is a groupe of children, some of which bear the shield of Alex-

* I have seen the design here mentioned: it is now at Paris. There are two; one is in red crayon, in which the figures are all naked; the other in water colour, which is here mentioned. Roxana is sitting on a bed. These designs have been engraved some time since. They are by Raphael, extremely beautiful, and formerly belonged to Rubens.

J. E.
ander,

188 A DIALOGUE ON

ander, shewing a fatigue and force agreeable to their age, and another bearing his lance. There is a third, who having got on his cuirass, not being able to support its weight, has fallen down and seems crying. All these figures have the most elegant airs, and various attitudes. In this composition Raphael has preserved history, propriety, and modesty: and besides this (as a mute Poet,) he has from his own conceptions imagined Hymen and the Boys.

FABRINI.

I THINK I have read this invention in Lucian*.

* The picture described by Lucian was exhibited at the Olympic Games. Pronexenides was so much pleased with it, that he gave the painter his daughter in marriage. Vide *Lucian Zeuxis et Du Eos Reflex.* Cr. vol. I. p. 398.

ARETIN.

A R E T I N.

BE that as it may, it is so happily expressed, that it would seem doubtful whether Raphael had taken it from the works of Lucian, or Lucian from the picture of Raphael, had not Lucian lived some ages before. But what of that? So Virgil described his Laocoon, such as he had before seen him, in the statue formed by three Rhodian artists, which now is seen in Rome, the wonder of every one*. The liberty is mutual, that

* The Laocoon here mentioned is in a court of the Belvedere Garden, and is justly esteemed one of the finest remains we have of the antients. — It was in the house of the emperor Titus. — Pliny gives it the character of “opus omnibus picturæ et statuariæ artis præferendum; a work to be preferred to all the productions of painting and sculpture;” and tells us it was done by Agefander, Polydorus, and Athenodorus, three Rhodians, whom he styles, “summi artifices, most excellent artists.” Winckelman, in his excellent Reflections on the Painting
and

painters frequently receive their ideas from the poets, and poets from the painters. The same may be said of his

and Sculpture of the Greeks, speaking of the noble simplicity and sedate grandeur of the Greek statues, says, "As the bottom of the sea lies peaceful beneath a foaming surface, a great soul lies sedate beneath the strife of passions in Greek figures. — In the face of Laocoon this soul shines with full lustre, not confined to the face, however, amidst the most violent sufferings ; pangs piercing every muscle, every labouring nerve ; pangs which we almost feel ourselves while we consider — not the face, nor the most expressive parts, — only the belly contracted by excruciating pains : these, however, I say, exert not themselves with violence either in the face or gesture. He pierces not heaven like the Laocoon of Virgil ; his mouth is rather opened to discharge an anxious over-loaded groan, as Sadolet says. The struggling boys and the supporting mind exert themselves with equal strength, nay balance all the frame. Laocoon suffers, but suffers like the Philoctetes of Sophocles ; we weeping feel his pains, but wish for the hero's strength to support his misery," — *Winckelman*, p. 30. See also the *Monumens de Rome*, p. 240.

Gala-

Galatea*, which contends with Politian's beautiful poem, and of many other of his elegant inventions. But it would make my discourse too long; and you may have seen them at several times, and can see them whenever you please in Rome; leaving apart the number of beautiful

* This beautiful Galatea is in the palace of Agustin Ghigi, built at Rome a la Longare, since called the Little Farnese. There is also in this palace the story of Psyche by Raphael, part of which was painted from his designs by his scholars, as are most of the works of this master. Several of these pictures, which were damaged, have been repaired by Carlo Maratti.

J. E.

This is the picture he did for Count Castiglione.— He was employed upon it when he wrote the letter from which a part is quoted, p. 110.

Raguenet says of it, " La Galathée est le corps de femme le mieux fait qu'ait jamais peint Raphael d'Urbain; les Contours en sont d'une elegance et d'une douceur charmantes; et l'on peut hardiment le mettre en parallele avec celui de la Venus de Medicis, qui est le plus parfait qui soit dans le monde." *Monumens de Rome*, p. 102.

designs

designs of his engraved by the no less skilful than diligent Marc Antonio†, and those also in the possession of different persons, which are almost innumerable ;

† Although the present age cannot contend with that of Raphael and Michael Angelo in excellence of painting, Engraving, an art which approaches the nearest to it, and perpetuates and disseminates the works of the best artists, has certainly received vast improvements within these very few years. The works of Marc Antonio and Augustin, often mentioned in this work, would gain little honour, compared with those of Mr. Strange, and several other excellent engravers at London ; or Bouchier at Paris. To these may be added, though in a different sphere of engraving, the admirable Cavaliere Piranese at Rome. A late judicious writer on prints says : “ Marc Antonio and Augustin of Venice are both celebrated, and have handed down to us many engravings from the works of Raphael : but their ANTIQUITY, not their MERIT, seems to have recommended them. Their execution is harsh and formal to the last degree ; and if their prints give us any idea of the works of Raphael, we may well wonder, as Picart observes, how that master got his reputation.” *Essay on Prints*, p. 77.

a striking

a striking evidence of the fertility of his genius, in all of which are admirable inventions, with all the circumstances which I have mentioned to you. And on sacred subjects, the picture of St. Cecilia, inventress of the organ, which is in the church of St. John of the Mountain, at Bologna, may suffice, and that of the * Trans-

* This was his last work, and is said to be all of his own hand, except some small part which was left unfinished at his death, and was compleated by Julio Romano. J. E.

Raguenet, in his *Monumens de Rome*, speaking of this picture, says, " Il y a ceci de particulier qu'on n'y voit rien qui surprenne, n'ayant aucun de ces traits éblouissans, qui se font admirer au premier aspect par tous ceux qui les regardent; mais que plus on a d'intelligence dans l'art de la peinture plus on y decouvre des beautés, qui font avouer tous les connoisseurs que cet ouvrage est non seulement le chef d'œuvre de Rafael, d'Urbain, mais encore le triomphe mesme de la peinture." P. 162. But notwithstanding the universal admiration of the connoisseurs, an English writer has been hardy enough to point out a defect. " O divine Raphael! (says
O he)

figuration of Christ upon Mount Tabor, which is in St. Peter Montorio's church

he) forgive me if I take the liberty to say, I cannot approve in this particular (unity of action) of that amazing picture of the Transfiguration, where the incidental action of the man's bringing his son possessed with the dumb devil to the disciples, and their not being able to cast him out, is made at least as conspicuous and as much a principal action, as that of the Transfiguration." *Richardson's Theory of Painting*, p. 60. Raphael seems to have foreseen such a critique upon his work, by his attempting to unite the two actions of his picture together, by making one of the disciples point up to the mountain, and directing the attention of the child's mother to the way his master was gone. — But notwithstanding this, it must be acknowledged the two parts of the picture are so much detached, as to destroy that *εὐσυνέπικτος* (as Aristotle calls it) that easiness of sight, that one united view and unity of action, which is as necessary to a perfect picture, as the *εὐσυνέπικτος* (which implies an unity of action also) of the same writer is to the perfection of the Epos. But we must prefer the sublime Demosthenes, though with many and great faults, (as Longinus teaches us) to the cold, regular, and faultless Hyperides.

We

in Rome ; without mentioning an infinite number of pictures which may be seen

We must add to the length of this note a remark, that the above is almost a single instance of a want of unity in the action of Raphael's pictures. — That great master was in general remarkably free from this fault. — There is a noble simplicity in his works, superior to those of any other artist. — For instance, we need go no farther than the Cartoons of St Paul at Athens, and the giving the keys. In the former, all the figures are in different gradations subservient to that of St. Paul, and all join to make one perfect whole, and every one of a character strongly marked, and different from one another ; as has been remarked by Du Bos, and the Bishop of Gloucester, in a note on Mr. Pope's Use of Riches, which well deserves the consideration of all who would wish fully to perceive the design and merit of the artist. — In the latter, the figures all tend to one point ; each of the apostle's characters is strongly marked ; and every part of the picture is so fully united with every other part, that none could be omitted without hurting the whole ; so great a master of poetry was this celebrated artist. But sometimes *dermitat bonus Homerus*, — — even Homer himself nods.

195 A DIALOGUE ON

throughout Italy, all beautiful, and truly divine.

F A B R I N I.

I HAVE, indeed, seen many works of Raphael in Rome and other places; and I assure you, I esteem them almost miraculous, and for invention, equal if not superior: but in design, how can you compare him to Michael Angelo?

A R E T I N.

I WILL always leave you, Fabrini, in full possession of your own opinion, not being able to do otherwise, since reason has not the power of conviction to all. This arises either from obstinacy, ignorance, or affection. In you, whose good sense excludes the two former causes, the third takes place, which is a pardonable defect, and, as I before said,

Speffo occhio ben fan fa veder torto.

—often turns aſlant the niceſt eye.

But

But as to design, which is the second part, since we must consider man naked and cloathed, I agree with you, that in the nude Michael Angelo is stupendous, truly miraculous, and more than human. No master ever excelled him. But only in one species, viz. a muscular body strongly marked with violent foreshortenings and action, which shew every difficulty of the art, and every part of the body; in these he has such excellence, that I dare affirm, not only no master can execute, but even that none can conceive any thing more perfect. But in every other species, he is not only inferior to himself, but even to others; because he either does not know, or will not observe those differences between ages and sexes, which are mentioned above, and in which Raphael is so admirable. To conclude, whoever sees one figure of Michael Angelo's, sees all. But we must observe, that Michael Angelo, in the nude,

has taken the more violent parts, and such as are most strongly marked, and Raphael has taken the pleasing and graceful: Whence some have compared Michael Angelo to Dante, and Raphael to Petrarca.

FABRINI.

Do not seek to bewilder me in such comparisons, though they make for my cause; for in Dante there is wisdom and learning, in Petrarca only elegance of style and poetical ornaments. I remember a Cordelier who preached some years ago at Venice, quoting frequently these two poets, used to call Dante September, and Petrarca May; alluding to the seasons, one full of fruit, the other of flowers*. But take together a nud by Michael

* Notwithstanding Fabrini and the Cordelier's compliments to Dante, Petrarca, the elegant Petrarca will always have an hundred readers to Dante's one. One principal cause of this indeed is, the local and temporary

Angelo and another by Raphael, and having fully considered them both, de-

temporary subject of Dante's poem. The disputes of the Guelphs and Ghibelines interest but in a very small degree readers of the present age, and many of the characters and actions alluded to in the poem, are buried in oblivion. The language also is as different from modern Italian as Chaucer's from modern English. Some parts of the *Inferno* must be allowed to be truly sublime. The entrance of the city, with the inscription over the gate, at the beginning of the third Canto, must strike every reader with horror, and the cruel death of Count Ugolin and his sons, is finely adapted to affect the passions of pity and terror. — The introducing Virgil as a guide to Dante, seems as great an error against propriety, as any of those we find the painters guilty of, and takes much from the beauty of the poem.

Petrarca is a poet of a quite different cast, and is hardly to be compared with Dante with any propriety. In his own province he is admirable. — There is a delicacy in his poems during Laura's life that is charming, and a luxuriancy of grief in those after her death, which no other author is possessed of: he allures the soul into his own *key*, and makes you participate exactly of his own sensations. The latter, I own, are to me far the more pleasing.

cide which of the two is the more perfect.

A R E T I N.

I ANSWER, that Raphael excelled in every kind of nud, and Michael Angelo succeeded only in one *; and that the nuds of Raphael excel his in promoting pleasure. I will not say, what was observed of a fine genius, that Michael Angelo has painted only Clowns, and Raphael

* “Michael Angelo has debauched the artists from grace. He who valued himself upon his being a pure intelligence, despised all that could please humanity: his exalted learning disdained to stoop to tender feelings and lovely grace.” — And again — “Immoderately fond of all that was extraordinary and difficult, he soon broke through the bounds of Antiquity, Grace, and Nature; and as he panted for occasions of displaying skill only, he grew extravagant.” These remarks of Winckelman on the sculpture of Michael Angelo, are equally applicable to his painting. — Vide *Winckelman's Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks*, p. 283.

Gen.

Gentlemen: but, as I before observed, Raphael succeeds in every part, the delicate, terrible, and expressive, but always with soft and temperate action. He was naturally fond of politeness and delicacy, as he was himself remarkably polite and gentle in his manners, inso-much that he himself was not less beloved than his paintings were acceptable.

F A B R I N I.

It is not sufficient to say this nud is as beautiful and perfect as that, but the assertion must be proved.

A R E T I N.

ANSWER me first: Are the nuds of Raphael, lame, dwarfish, too fleshy? Are they dry? Have they the muscles out of their proper places, or other parts vicious?



FABRINI.

FABRINI.

I HAVE heard it as the general opinion, that they are well painted, but that they do not contain so great a degree of art as those of Michael Angelo.

ARETIN.

WHAT is that art?

FABRINI.

THEY have not the elegant Contours that the figures of the other have.

ARETIN.

WHAT are these elegant Contours?

FABRINI.

THOSE which form such beautiful legs, hands, backs, breasts, and all other parts.

ARETIN.

A R E T I N.

DOES it not then appear to you, and to the other favourers of Michael Angelo, that the nudes of Raphael have these parts also beautiful?

F A B R I N I.

I SAY not merely beautiful, but extremely so; but yet not in the perfection that the nudes of Michael Angelo have them.

A R E T I N.

WHENCE do you deduce the rule for judging of this beauty?

F A B R I N I.

I THINK it should be taken (as you have already said) from life, and from the statues of the antients.

A R E T I N.

A R E T I N.

YOU confess then, that the nudes of Raphael have every beautiful and perfect part; for he seldom did any thing in which he did not imitate either the one or the other: whence we see in his figures, heads, legs, turns of the body, arms, feet, and hands, that are wonderful.

F A B R I N I.

HE did not mark the bones, muscles, and certain little nerves and minutiae, so strongly as Michael Angelo has.

A R E T I N.

HE has marked those parts sufficiently strong, which required to be so marked, and Michael Angelo (be it said without offence) sometimes more so than was proper. This is so clear, that there is no need to exemplify it farther. I must put
you

you in mind that I have said, it is of greater importance to cloath the bones with plump soft flesh, than to foreshorten the figures; and as a proof of this truth, I add. that the antients have, for the most part, made their figures tender, and with few parts strongly marked. Yet Raphael has not always stopped at delicacy: he has, as I have said before, for the sake of varying his figures, made some nudes strongly marked, as he found occasion; as may be seen in his battle*, in the old man carried by his son, and in many others. But he was not extremely fond of this manner, because he placed his

* The battle of Constantine against Maxentius, in the Hall of Constantine, at the Vatican, designed by Raphael, and painted by Julio Romano, probably the finest piece of painting in fresco in the world. See a Description of and Remarks upon it, in *Raguenet's Monumens de Rome*, who concludes with saying, "there is scarce any work of this character, but what seems cold compared with this." P. 221, &c.

principal

principal end in pleasing, (as really being the principal part of painting) seeking rather the name of elegant than terrible: and he acquired another, being generally called Graceful *; for besides Invention,

* It is remarkable that Apelles and Raphael, the greatest antient and modern artists, were both celebrated for their excellence in giving grace to their figures. This is the last finishing stroke of the master, which meaner painters never can attain to. When we have mentioned Raphael, Corregio, and Guido, the line of graceful painters is almost extinct. "To grace (says a judicious writer) Apelles and Corregio owe immortality; but Michael Angelo was blind to it." *Winckelman's Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks*, p. 274.

"The last finishing and noblest part of beauty, (says the ingenious author of *Crito*) is Grace; which every body is accustomed to speak of, as a thing inexplicable; and in a great measure I believe it is so. We know that the soul is, but we scarce know what it is; every judge of beauty can point out Grace, but no one that I know of has ever yet fixed upon a definition of it." This admirable writer has gone the farthest of any in pointing out wherein grace consists. What he says upon it is too long

Design, Variety, and the effect which all his works have on the spectator's mind, there are found in them that which Pliny says characterised the figures of Apelles, that *venustas*, that *je ne sçai quoi*, which uses to charm so much in painting as well as poetry; infomuch that it fills the mind of the spectator or reader with infinite delight, without our knowing what gives us pleasure; which consideration caused Petrarca (that admirable and elegant painter of the beauties and virtues of Madonna Laura) to sing thus:

long to be inserted here; but the reader will find it in *Crito*, p. 29, &c. a work that merits to be written in letters of gold, and preserved as a jewel unrivalled for its taste and beauty.

There is also an Essay on this subject in Winckelman's *Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks*, and some remarks on it in the "Reflexions pour servir de notes au poeme de l'art de peindre, par M. Watelet."

802 A DIALOGUE ON

“ * *E un non so che ne gli occhi, che in un punto*

“ *Po far chiara la notte, e scuro il giorno,*

“ *E'l mel' amaro, et addolcir l'ascentio.*”

A certain something in her eye is seen,

Which causes night to shine like day serene,

Or veil the day, when shining clear and bright,

At once with all the clouds and shades of night,

In honey wormwoods bitter can create,

And gives to bitters all the honey's sweet.

FABRINI.

THIS which you call *venustas*, is called by the Greeks *Χαρις*, which I would always translate by the word Grace †.

* Parte prima, Sonetto 179.

* We may observe, that the poets have always treated of Grace as the completion of beauty, as independent of other parts of beauty, but necessary to give them all their due force Motion is also always included in Grace; which has induced Mr. Webb to define it, “ the most pleasing conceivable action expressed with the utmost simplicity.” Thus Milton describes Eve leaving Adam with the Angel.

“ With lowliness majestic from her seat

“ And grace, that won who saw to wish her stay,

“ Rose —————

Par. Lost, B. viii. 42.

And

A R E T I N.

THE great Raphael knew also perfectly well how to foreshorten figures when he

And afterwards,

“ With goddess-like demeanor forth she went ;

“ Not unattended ! for on her, as queen,

“ A pomp of winning Graces waited still. — *Id.* 59.

In the first line he seems to have remembered the “ *incessu patuit Dea* ” of Virgil.

The same poet also makes Adam say of his meeting Eve,

————— “ Behold her not far off.

“ Such I saw her in my dream — adorn’d

“ With all that Earth or Heaven could bestow,

“ To make her amiable : on she came,

“ —————

“ Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,

“ In every gesture dignity and love.” *Ver.* 481.

So Musæus, describing Hero, ascribes grace to every member ; but more especially that her eyes shot forth graces, in the following beautiful lines :

“ Πολλὰ δὲ μέλιω χάριτες ὄον. Οἷοι παλαιὸν

“ Τῶν χάριτος ψεύσαντο περικύβητι· εἰς δὲ τις ἦεν,

“ Ὀφθαλμοῖς γούνοισι κατὰ χάριτοςσι τεύχλει.”

P

Aristo

pleased. Besides, I again repeat to you, that in all his works he had a variety so admirable, that no one figure resembles another, either in air or motion; so that there is not the least shadow of that which is improperly called by painters "Manner," that is, bad practice, in which you constantly see forms and faces resembling one another. And as Michael Angelo in his works always fought after difficulty, so, on the contrary, Raphael fought ease; a part, as I before observed, difficult to obtain; and he obtained it in such a manner, that his works seem to be done without much thought, and

Ariosto seems to add this last perfection to the form of his Alcina, in the two lines following those quoted by my Author:

Avea in ogni parte un laccio teso,

O parli o rida o canti o passo mova.

Grace being so necessary a part of the beauty of the human form, it must be so likewise to the perfection of the imitative art.

by

by no means laboured; which is a mark of the greatest perfection. So also among writers, the best in the esteem of the learned are the easiest; as Virgil and Cicero in the Roman language, and in ours Petrarca and Ariosto. As to expression of the passions, and a power over the mind, I shall add nothing to what I have said before, which I touched upon, only lest you should say that his figures failed in this part.

F A B R I N I.

THIS I do not deny. But what say you of the figures of Michael Angelo?

A R E T I N.

I WILL not say any thing concerning them, because it is a part of which all are capable of judging; nor would I chuse to offend you by what I should say.

FABRINI.

PROCEED then to colouring.

ARETIN.

It is necessary that we should first consider the man when cloathed.

FABRINI.

Of this you need not say any more ; I know that the drapery of Raphael is more commended than that of Michael Angelo; perhaps because Raphael studied more of the manner of dressing figures, and Michael Angelo the nude.

ARETIN.

RATHER, Raphael studied both one and the other, and Michael Angelo the latter only : We may therefore determine, that as to design they were equal, or rather

ther that Raphael was superior, as his talents were more various and universal; as he has better preserved the distinctions of sexes and ages; and as his pictures abound more in grace and beauty, inso-much that there never was any but received pleasure from them. — As to colouring —

F A B R I N I.

THUS far I agree with you; pray proceed. —

A R E T I N.

IN Colouring the graceful Raphael excelled all his predecessors in painting, whether in Oil or in Fresco; but still more remarkably in the latter; inso-much that I have heard many say, and I dare affirm to you, that the paintings of Raphael in Fresco exceed in Colouring the works of the best masters in Oil. They are soft, and united with the most beau-

tiful relieve, and with every perfection art can produce. Santo Zago, a painter, who himself was excellent, particularly in painting in Fresco; also studious in collecting antiques, of which he has a great number, extremely fond of reading, and well versed in history and poetry; used to expatiate upon Raphael's excellence in this point in all companies. I shall not speak of Michael Angelo's Colouring, because every one knows that he took little care in this article, and you give it up to me. But Raphael knew the art, by the means of colouring, to produce flesh, drapery, landscape, and whatever else is objective to the art of the painter *. He also sometimes painted por-

* Raphael's universal genius entitles him to the praise Pliny gives to an antient artist; "*Docilis ac laboriosus ante omnes et in quocumque genere excellens ac sibi æqualis.*" L. xxxv. c. 11. "*Docile and industrious above all others, excellent in every part of his art, and always equal to himself.*"

traits from nature ; amongst others Pope Julius the Second, Pope Leo the Tenth, and many other great personages, which are all esteemed divine. He was also a great architect ; for which reason, after the death of * Bramante, the building of St. Peter and the Palace was destined to him by the same Pope Leo ; whence we frequently see in his pictures buildings drawn perfectly just as to the architecture and perspective. His early death † was a very great loss to painting : He left his name behind him illustrious throughout Europe, and lived during the few years

* Bramante was a countryman of Raphael's, and somewhat related to him. It was he who proposed to Julius the Second, to call him to Rome, to paint the chambers of the Vatican, in which other painters had already laboured, particularly Peter Perugino his master, some of whose pictures he preserved out of respect. J. E.

† In 1520, aged 37, on Good Friday, his birthday. Vide *Advocat. Dis. Hist.*

of his life, (as I can assure you of my own knowledge, and as Vafari has justly written) not like a private man, but like a prince *, being liberal of his

* Vafari (whose life of this astonishing painter is very well worth reading) says, "The kindness and sweetness of his temper was such, that if any painter, whether known to him or not, wanted his assistance in any design, he would leave his own work to assist him. He always kept a number of artists employed, assisting and teaching them rather as his children than as scholars." He confirms what our author says, of the Pope's intention to make him a Cardinal, and Cardinal Bibiena's solicitude to have him marry his niece, to whom Raphael left a genteel fortune. — He also says, "His death gave the greatest concern to all the Pope's court, in which he had held the office of Chamberlain; and even the Pope himself was so much affected, as to weep bitterly. — Painting itself may be said to have died with this noble artist, and to have become blind, when his eyes were closed. To us it only remains to imitate the excellent method of which he has left us an example, to retain a grateful sense of his virtues and our obligations, and to express it in the most honourable manner we can. For, in truth, he brought

knowledge and fortune to such students in his art as needed the assistance of either. It was universally believed that the Pope intended to give him a Cardinal's Hat: For beside all his excellence as a painter, Raphael possessed every virtue, excellence of morals, and elegance of manners, that become a gentleman. These excellent qualities induced the Cardinal Bibiena to press him, contrary to his own will, to marry his niece. Raphael delayed the time of consummating the marriage, expecting that the Pope (who had intimated his intention to him) would make him a Cardinal. The same Pope had given him a little while before his death the office of Chamberlain, an appointment both of honour and profit. After all I

brought his art, both as to invention and colouring, to the highest perfection; nor can any one be expected to arise in future time, who shall excel him." *Vasari Vita di Raffael d'Urbino.*

have

have said, you may rest assured, that Raphael was not only equal, but superior to Michael Angelo in painting. In Sculpture Michael Angelo stands alone, divine, and equal to the antients; nor in this has he need of my praises; nor can he be excelled by any.

FABRINI.

YOUR discourse, my friend Aretin, has been very pleasing to me: For the future I shall think as you do; for with such reasons a man cannot be deceived. But we have still time to spare; and if you are not fatigued with speaking, you might conveniently inform me of the respective excellencies of some other painters.

ARETIN.

I AM not used to be tired with so short a discourse; and this is a matter which I have already promised you; nor will I fail to mention some, that you may see, that
heaven

heaven has in our days been as favourable to Painting as to Literature.

I say, then, that LIONARDO DA VINCI was in every part equal to Michael Angelo, but had so elevated a genius, that he never was contented with what he had done. As he was great in every thing, so in painting horses he was stupendous*.

* Lionardo da Vinci was son of Piero da Vinci, and had by nature a great inclination for painting. His father carrying some of his drawings to Andrea del Verrochio, this latter was astonished at the progress he had made by the strength of his genius alone, unassisted by art, and took him under his care. He studied geometry, in which he became excellent, as also in Sculpture, which he had applied himself to when a boy, forming heads of earth. He also made designs in architecture. Nature was so bountiful to him, according to Vasari, that to whatsoever he turned his mind, he succeeded in it, and was unequalled by any of his age, for the quickness and the vivacity, beauty, grace, and perfection found in all his works. The gratitude of his age compared him rather too flatteringly to Apelles and Phidias, and their contemporaries. He certainly was the first
excellent

GEORGIO DA CASTELFRANCO was also a painter in high estimation, but still greater expectance : Some of his works in oil have such vivacity and brilliancy, that there seem to be no shadows. This great man died of the plague, with no small loss to painting *.

JULIO ROMANO was a great painter, who shewed himself to have been a disciple worthy of Raphael, not only

excellent painter after the revival of the art ; the works of Cimabue and his followers being cold and lifeless. In what repute he stood with Francis the First, has been already mentioned, p. 54. He was, beside his excellence in painting and architecture, esteemed the best musician, the best rider, the best fencer, the best dancer, the most laborious, the most diligent man of his age. Vide *Vasari et Baretti Ital. Libr.* He founded the Florentine school, and enriched the art more by his writings, the result of long study, than his pictures, which are not numerous.

* Castelfranco, generally called Giorgione, was contemporary in the Venetian School, to Lionardo da Vinci in the Florentine. He is principally known as having been for some time Titian's master.

in

in painting, but also in architecture. These qualities rendered him very dear to Frederic Duke of Mantua, for whom he painted many pictures, all of which received the highest praises; he also ornamented Mantua with most beautiful buildings. He was happy in invention, a good designer, and his colouring most beautiful. But he was excelled in colouring, and in the graceful manner, by ANTONIO DA CORREGGIO*, a most elegant master. We may see many of his pictures in Parma of such beauty, that it seems as if greater could not even be wished. It is true, he excels more in colouring than in design †.

* He was not of Correggio, but of a little village near.
J. E.

† It is astonishing to find a genius like that of Correggio breaking through the cloud of birth and situation; it shews that nothing can totally conceal or overcome the divine fire which is given by Nature. Correggio, the native of a little village, gave to painting a perfection to which even the immortal works of Raphael had not attained. Although
naturally

But what shall I say to you of FRANCESCO PARMEGIANO? He gave a certain beauty

naturally of a timid disposition, he dared to attempt a manner totally different from all his predecessors; but not without being certain of the effect. He knew, he felt, that grace was intimately connected with sensibility of soul; and therefore, from his nicer perceptions of beauty in nature, he was enabled to present a more perfect reflection of it to the eye of the spectator. He understood and practised the most beautiful colouring, the most perfect *chiaro scuro*, imitated the softness and elasticity of flesh, gave to his figures the most graceful attitudes and agreeable *embanpoint* of any painter who ever existed. — We had lately the pleasure of seeing a Magdalen of his exhibited to the public, of which Mr. Strange, the fortunate possessor, says justly, “No other than the pencil of Correggio could have introduced such a peculiar character of beauty, blended with so much grace and sweetness, as we see in this head.” Indeed Correggio may justly be called the painter of beauty, sweetness, grace, and sensibility. He died of a fever, in consequence of drinking cold water when hot with walking, aged 40, having been generally distressed in his circumstances by providing for a large family.

to all his works, which enamours all who see them. He coloured also in a delicate manner, and was so elegant and accurate in his design, that the works he has left on paper astonish every spectator. He was extremely fond of the works and name of Raphael, and also died young. It was said in Rome, (as Vasari writes) that the soul of Raphael had entered into his body, because of the conformity of their genius and customs. **PARMEGIANO** was unjustly accused of attending to Alchymy; for there never was a Philosopher who despised money, and the produce of it, more than he did. **BATTISTA** of Parma, his disciple, an excellent sculptor, together with many others, testifies this. **GIROLAMO MAZZOLA**, his cousin, now walks in the same steps, in an honourable and very respectable manner.

FABRINI.

PARMIGIANINO also is, I think, very much praised.

ARETIN.

POLIDORO* DA CARAVAGGIO was also a great and excellent painter; ---- his inventions beautiful, ---- an experienced and expeditious designer, and a great imitator of the Antique. It is true, he did not excel in colouring, and his most excellent works are in *chiaro scuro* in fresco. But what is most surprising is, that Polidoro was little less than one or two-and-

* Polidoro came young from Caravaggio to Rome, at the time when the Vatican was painting by order of Leo the Tenth. He was a poor mason, and carried the hod; but observing the works of the painters employed there, he fell so much in love with painting, and studied it with such success, as to render his beautiful works celebrated throughout the world.

J. E.

twenty-

twenty-two years of age when he began to learn the art : He studied under Raphael. He also died very young, being killed after a terrible manner in Messina, in order to rob him, by a servant, who afterwards met with the punishment his crime deserved.

F A B R I N I.

I BEGIN to find that Michael Angelo does not stand alone in painting.

A R E T I N.

ANDREA DEL SARTO had also great perfection in this art : his works were infinitely pleasing to Francis king of France. PERINO DEL VAGA merits no small praise. The painters have always esteemed the works of ANTONIO DA PORDONONE, who was an experienced and expeditious master, and delighted in foreshortenings and terrible figures. There are

Q

some

some excellent pictures of his in fresco in Venice; as, a Mercury in the front of the house del Talenti, which is well foreshortened; a battle and a horse, which are much commended; and a Proserpine in the arms of Pluto, which is an elegant figure. There is also in the great chapel of the church of St. Roch, a picture of God the Father, with some angels in heaven, and also some Doctors and Evangelists, which gained him great reputation*. It was necessary he should have all these qualities, having to contend with Titian, to whom however he was very inferior. Nor is it any wonder; since in Titian alone (be

* The cloister of the convent of the Augustines of St. Stephen in Venice, is painted by his hand. It is said, there was such an emulation between Titian and him, that he always painted with a sword by his side, and a shield near, like the bravoes of that time.

J. E.

Of the painters here mentioned full accounts may be seen in Vafari.

it

it said in peace with other painters) all those excellencies are collected together in perfection, which are found dispersed in many others. As for invention and design, none ever exceeded him: In colouring none ever was his equal. To Titian alone must be yielded the palm of perfect colouring, which none of the antients* could ever obtain; or if they did,

* Apelles was esteemed to excel in colouring. — He is said to have used a warmth of colouring similar (by what we may judge) to that of Titian. — The antients, if they did not excel in beautiful colouring, had a great advantage over the moderns in durability. — Plutarch, in his Life of Aristides, gives us an instance of this. After the battle of Platea, the Athenians and Lacedemonians disputed the honour of the day; the determination was left to the Greeks, who declared the honour must be given to some third city. — It was determined in favour of the Platzeans; to which Aristides gave consent, in the name of the Athenians, and Pausanias for the Lacedemonians: “ *ἔγω δὲ διαλλαγόντις ἐξήλωσεν ὅγδοη-
κοντα ταλάντα τοῖς Πλαταιεύσι ἀφ’ ὧν τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς ἀνω-
νομήθησαν ἱερὰ καὶ τ’ ἐκοσμήσαν γραφαῖς αἱ μέχρι νῦν ἀμνα-*

it has always been wanting in a greater or less degree to all the moderns: For, as I have said, he equalled Nature herself; whence all his figures seem alive, to move and breathe. Titian has not shewn any vain desire of beauty, but a propriety of colouring; no affected ornaments, but the modesty of a master; no crudeness, but the tender fleshiness of nature. In his pictures the lights always contend with the shades, and diminish, and lose, themselves in the same manner as in nature.

Lucius diaphanorum. So being reconciled, they set apart fourscore talents (out of the spoils) for the Platæans, wherewith they built a temple to Minerva, and adorned it with pictures, which even to this very day retain their full lustre." At the time of Plutarch's writing, these pictures were about 570 years old; and I am informed by gentlemen who have seen the remains of antient pictures at Rome, that the colours are so fixed into the *intonacatura*, (a kind of stucco, upon which they are painted) as to have dyed it to a considerable depth, making the paintings by these means almost eternal.

FABRINI.

F A B R I N I.

I HEAR every one make the same observation.

A R E T I N.

* It is well known too that Nature made him a painter. For being born at Cadora of honourable parents, he was sent, when a child of nine years old, by his father to Venice, to the house of his father's brother, (who there attended the care of one of those honourable offices which are always given to citizens) in order that he might be put under some proper master to study painting ; his father

* I have read somewhere that Titian was born in the year 1477, in a little castle called Pieve, dependent on Cadora, in the confines of Friuli, of honourable parents, named Vecelli; of which family was St. Titian, bishop of Odezzo, whence I suppose he had the name of Titian.

J. E.

Q 3

having

239 A DIALOGUE ON

having perceived in him, even at that tender age, strong marks of genius toward the art.

FABRINI.

I AM pleased to hear any particular in regard to a painter so singularly excellent.

ARETIN.

HIS uncle directly carried the child to the house of Sebastian (father of the elegant Valerius) and of Francis Zuccati, (the only masters in the art of mosaic, by them brought to that perfection in which we now see their best pictures) to learn the principles of the art. From thence he was removed to Gentil Bellin, (brother of John, but much inferior to him) who at that time was at work with his brother in the grand council-chamber. But Titian, pushed on by Nature to greater excellence and perfection
in

in the art, could not endure following the dry and laboured manner of Gentil, but designed with boldness and expedition. Gentil on this told him, he would make no progress in painting, because he entirely deserted his manner.

TITIAN leaving the ignorant Gentil, applied himself to John Bellin; but not perfectly pleased with his manner, he chose Georgio da Castelfranco. Designing and painting with Giorgione (as he was called), he became shortly so excellent in his art, that when Giorgione was painting the front of the * German Warehouse which looks over the great Canal, that part already mentioned regarding

* The *Fondaco dei Tedeschi*, or German Warehouse, is situated upon the grand Canal, near the Rialto. The façade toward the Canal was painted by Giorgione, that toward the street by Titian, who in it imitated Giorgione's manner. Vide *Festier illuminato*, &c.

232 A DIALOGUE ON

Mercery was given to Titian, who was not yet quite twenty years of age; in which he painted Judith so admirably, both for design and colouring, that on its being opened to public view, and generally thought to be the work of Giorgione, all his friends congratulated him upon it, as far the best thing he ever had done. Giorgione replied with regret, that it was the work of a disciple, who already shewed himself greater than his master; and what is more, he stayed at home several days, behaving like a madman, that such a youth should surpass him.

FABRINI.

I HAVE heard that Giorgione said, that Titian was a painter in his mother's womb.

ARETIN.

A R E T I N.

Not long after he was employed to paint a picture for the high altar of the church of the Minor Friars*; in which Titian, as yet a youth, painted a virgin, in oil, ascending to heaven, among many angels that accompany her (with God the Father above between two angels). She really appears ascending, with a face full of humility, and her drapery flowing lightly. On the ground are the Apostles, who by diverse attitudes express joy and wonder: They are for the most part larger than life. It is certain this one picture contains at once the grandeur of Michael Angelo, the pleasing grace and *venustas* of Raphael, together with

* The picture here mentioned was in Vasari's time so hurt by carelessness, that the figures were scarce discernible. Titian also painted the altar-piece of the Conception in the same church, and lies buried under the altar of the Crucifix.

the proper colouring of nature. And yet this was the first public work that he did in oil; he did it in a very short time, and was very young. With all this merit, ignorant painters, and the blind vulgar, who hitherto had seen nothing but the dead and cold pictures of John Bellin, Gentil, and Vivarino, which were without motion or relief, (for Giorgione had not done as yet any public work in oil, or at most nothing but half figures and portraits) said all the ill they could of this very picture. At length, * Envy growing cool, and Truth by little and little opening their eyes, the people began to wonder at the new manner found out at Venice by Titian, and all the painters from that time studied to imitate him; but being put out of their own

* It is true that this picture did not please the Friars; but the Cesarean Ambassador being willing to buy it, they at length opened their eyes, and held it in higher esteem.

way, found themselves at a stand. And certainly it may be almost attributed to a miracle, that Titian, without having even seen the antiques at Rome, which afforded light to all the excellent painters, with only the little glimmering he had discovered in the works of Giorgione, saw and conceived the idea of perfect painting.

F A B R I N I.

It is a proverb of the antient Greeks, "That it is not given to all to go to Corinth;" and you have said, to paint well is given but to few.

A R E T I N.

TITIAN had now acquired so great reputation by his works, that there was not a gentleman in Venice who did not endeavour to procure a portrait or some other picture done by him; many pictures were bespoken of him; different churches

churches were adorned with his works. In the church of these Friars a picture was done by him, at the instance of the * Pefaro family, for the altar (where the font of holy water is, with a little marble figure of St. John Baptist, done by Sansovino), wherein he painted a Madonna sitting with the child on her lap, gently holding up one of its legs, and resting the other foot on one of her hands. Before her is St. Peter, of a venerable aspect, turning toward her with one of his hands on an open book, supported by the other, and the keys lying at his feet. There are also St. Francis, and a man in armour holding a standard, with the portraits of some of the Pefari, which appear quite like nature. Within the

* The author of the *Forstier illuminato*, &c. speaks of the mausoleum of this family, but says nothing of the picture mentioned here by Aretin; by which I suppose it has since been removed by the family. It was in the church when Vasari wrote.

cloister

cloister of the church* of St. Nicholas, he also painted a picture for the great altar, wherein that Saint is the principal figure, dressed in a golden cope, where the lustre and brilliancy of that metal is discernible, and seems really interwoven. On one side is St. Catherine, with a slight turn, her face and every other part truly divine; on the other, a naked Sebastian, beautifully formed, and with a tinct of carnation so like to nature, that it seems not painted, but really alive. Pordonone going to see this St. Sebastian, said, "I believe Titian has in this nude really put flesh, not colour." There are some other very excellent figures at a distance. They all appear, as it were, intent on a virgin, who is represented above, together with some angels. Every figure shews a modesty and sanctity which is

* This church was burn'd down in the great fire which destroyed a large part of the City *An. 1126.*

238 A DIALOGUE ON

inestimable. Besides which, the head of St. Nicholas is truly admirable, and full of infinite majesty *.

FABRINI.

I HAVE frequently seen these works. They are divine, and could not have been executed by any other hand.

ARETIN.

IN the church of St. Mary the Greater he painted a little picture of St. John Baptist in the Desert, of which one may safely believe, that there never was seen any thing more beautiful or great either for design or colouring. In St. John and St. Paul, he painted the pic-

* It seems imitated from that of Laocoon. Poussin, in an extacy of St. Paul, has also imitated the same head; but these two painters have both softened the expression.

J. E.

ture

ture of the Bishop Peter Martyr fallen to the ground, with the assassin lifting up his arm to strike him, and a Monk in flight with some little angels in the air, who descend with the crown of martyrdom. This is in a woody country, with several elder-trees; all having such perfection, that it is much easier to envy than imitate them. The Friar seems to fly with a countenance full of fear; it seems as if one heard him cry out; his action is bold, as of one who is really frightened; his drapery is made in a manner of which we have no example. The face of St. Peter has the paleness usually attendant on the faces of persons at the approach of death. He puts forth an arm and hand so well, that one may say, Nature is conquered by Art.

I SHALL not extend my discourse so far as to point out to you the beauties of invention, design, and colouring, because
they

they are known to you and every one else *. While Titian was yet young, the Senate gave him an ample provision; and he painted in the hall I have so often mentioned, the history of Frederic Barbarossa, kissing the Pope's feet; and in another part of the hall a battle †, where there are many different forms of soldiers, horses, and other remarkable things; and among others, a young man, who having fallen into a ditch, in getting out gains the shore by a stretch of his leg so natural, that the leg seems not to be painting but real. You may observe I pass slightly over these works; because only to mention the excellencies, I must

* This is the picture mentioned in the beginning of the discourse. Vafari says of it, "that it is the most compleat, most celebrated, most excellent, best understood, and best conducted of any picture Titian ever painted."

† These pictures are burnt. There are plates of them but the engravings are very scarce. J. E. rest

rest upon them a whole day. The fame of Titian was not confined within the bounds of Venice, but spread itself diffusedly all over Italy, and made many of the principal nobility desirous of having some of his works; among whom were Alphonſus Duke of Ferrara, Frederic Duke of Mantua, Francis Maria Duke of Urbino, and many others. Having extended to Rome, it induced Pope Leo to invite him with honourable appointments, that Rome, besides the pictures of Raphael and M. Angelo, might have some of the divine works of his hands. But the great Navagero, no less acquainted with painting than with poetry, (particularly in Latin, in which he was so excellent,) foreseeing, that in losing him Venice would be despoiled of one of her greatest ornaments, prevailed with him not to go*. His fame also extended into France;

* He did go to Rome, but returned from thence home to Venice after the death of Leo and Raphael,

nor did King Francis fail to solicit him with high offers to come to him; but Titian would not leave Venice, whither he had come when a child, and had chosen it for his country. Of Charles the Fifth I have spoken to you already; so that I conclude, that there never was a painter who was so much esteemed by princes, as Titian always was. See the force of supreme excellence!

FABRINI.

LET who will say to the contrary, merit never can rest long concealed; and every man possessed of it, if he governs himself with prudence, is the architect of his own fortune.

in 1526, at which time he did the picture of St. John Baptist; mentioned above. About the same time he became acquainted with Arctin.

ARETIN.

and much of his work is now in the hands of the
 and much of his work is now in the hands of the
 and much of his work is now in the hands of the

CERTAINLY, Fabrini, one may say
 with the greatest truth, that there never
 was any painter who did greater honour
 to his profession than Titian. For know-
 ing his own merit, he always esteemed his
 pictures of the highest value, not caring
 to paint unless for great persons, and such
 as were able to reward him properly for
 them. It would be too long to recount
 the portraits done by him, which are of
 such excellence, that life itself scarce
 seems more alive, and all of them Kings,
 Emperors, Popes, Princes, or other great
 men. There never was a cardinal or
 other person of consequence in Venice,
 that did not go to Titian's house to see
 his works, and sit to him. I should be
 too prolix, if I was to discourse of his
 pictures, which are in the chambers of
 the college, and of the many others done
 by him for the Emperor and the King of
 R. 2 England;

England; as, the picture of the Trinity, the weeping Madonna, of Titius, of Tantalus, of Sisyphus, of Andromeda, and of Adonis*, (of which engravings will be published soon) and of other historical and fabulous stories; works equally divine, whether considered with respect to design, colouring, or invention. But I will restrain and moderate myself in his praises, both as he is my friend and companion, and as he must be blind who cannot see the sun. I must not omit mentioning, that Titian painted at Mantua for the Duke Frederic, the twelve Cæsars, taken partly from medals, and partly from antique

* Henry the VIIIth, for whom these pictures were done, invited Titian to England, as he had Holbein and other celebrated painters. The Adonis here mentioned is highly praised by Dolce, in a letter to M. Aless. Contarini, which we find in the *Raccolta di Lettere sulla Pittura Scultura ed Architettura*, Vol. 3. p. 257. from which it seems, as if Titian was particularly careful in the pictures he did for Henry.

marbles.

marbles. They are of such exquisite perfection, that vast numbers go to that city only to see them, thinking that they see the Cæsars themselves, not pictures.

F A B R I N I.

I KNOW well that few of the lower rank can boast the having any portrait or other picture done by him.

A R E T I N.

OUR Titian is, then, in painting divine and unequalled; nor ought Apelles himself, were he alive, to disdain to do him honour*. But besides his wonderful excellence in painting, he has many other qualities worthy of the highest praises.

* An honour that great painter never refused to merit; witness his treatment of Protogenes, whose great excellence not being known to his countrymen, Apelles opened their eyes, by offering him the immense price of fifty talents for every one of his pictures.

In

In the first place, he is extremely modest, never wounding invidiously any painter's character, but speaks honourably of every one who deserves it. He also is a most elegant speaker; of a most perfect genius and judgment in all things; of a gentle and placid temper; affable; of the most delicate manners; insomuch that whoever once speaks to him must always love him.

FABRINI.

ALL this is perfectly true; and as I think nothing more remains for you to say on this subject, we may conclude; that although there are at present many excellent painters, those three hold the first rank, Michael Angelo, Raphael, and Titian.

ARETIN.

It is so, with the distinctions which I have mentioned before. At present, I fear that painting is losing itself again,

again, as we do not see any young artist that gives hopes of arriving at any great degree of excellence. Those who might by diligence become celebrated, overcome by avarice, bestow little or no labour on their works. Baptista Franco, the Venetian, is not guilty of this fault; he studies with all solicitude, both in painting and designing, to honour Venice, and to acquire perpetual fame to himself; whence he is a much commended master, both in painting and design. But do you remember, for the future, leaving aside all affection, to be a more equitable judge,

F I N I S.

I N D E X

A



All books

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I N D E X.

N. B. The Italic *n*, refers to the Notes.

A ARON, how to be represented in painting,
page 88.

ADDISON, (Mr.) p. 36, *n*. 164, *n*.

ADRIAN, Emperor, p. 51.

ÆLIAN quoted, p. 42.

ALBERT DURER. Vid. DURER.

ALBERTI on painting recommended, p. 168.

ALCINA described by Ariosto, p. 111.

Allegories (the absurdity of some of the modern)
p. 184, *n*.

ALCAROTTI, p. 53, *n* 91, *n*.

ALEXANDER, p. 42, 130, *n*.

———— SEVERUS, p. 51.

Anatomy to be studied, 136, *n*. 137.

ANDREA del SARTO, p. 5, 66.

———— his character as an artist, p. 225.

ANGELO, (M.) p. 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19,

21, 22, 31, 48, 55, 63, 74, 115, *n* 128, *n*. 129, *n*.

130, *n*. 149, *n*. 171, 173, 178, 182, 185, 200,

206, *n*. 210, 211, 212, 233, 241, 246.

———— compared with Raphael, 171, &c.

ANGELO,

ANGELO (Michael) his Last Judgment, 176, &c. 189.

———— succeeds not in grace, p. 206, n.

———— excels in design, 22, 171.

———— a Poet, p. 26, n.

———— his school, p. 129, n.

———— his Moses, p. 13, n.

———— in what he excelled, p. 173, n. 167, n.

———— reproved as immodest, p. 174.

———— his paintings allegorical, p. 182.

———— his excellence in sculpture, p. 218.

ANTIENTS, how they formed their beautiful figures,
p. 36, n. 109

———— their care in their works, p. 155.

ANTIQUES studied by the best masters, p. 128, n.

———— Rubens opinion of their use and necessity,
p. 129, n.

———— necessary to be studied by the painter,
p. 131.

ANTONIO (MARC) Engraver. Vid. MARC ANTONIO.

APELLES, p. 6, 39, 42, 45, 53, 130, n. 147, 152,
161, 227, 245.

———— the most graceful of the antients. p. 17, n.
206, n.

———— his Venus, p. 127.

———— drawn from Phryne, p. 128.

———— painted two Venus's, p. 128, n.

———— his appeal to horses, p. 152, n.

APOLLONIUS, p. 10.

ARETIN, p. 31, n. 179, n.

ARIOSTO, p. 18, 37, n. 116.

———— quoted, p. 18, n. 171, 210, n.

———— his description of Alcina, p. 111.

———— translation of the above description, p.
113, n.

ARISTÆNETUS, quoted, p. 36, n.

ARISTIDES,

ARISTIDES, the Theban, p. 5.

ARISTOTLE, p. 40, 56, 78, 131, n. 194, n.

Artist (one who is not an) may judge of the Arts, p. 40.

ARTS, the polite, humanize the mind, p. 175, n.

— ornamental and useful, p. 40.

— have all thriven in the same times, p. 130, n.

ATHENÆUS, p. 122.

ATTALUS, K. bought a picture of **ARISTIDES** the Theban, p. 52.

AUGUSTINO, (Engraver) p. 192, n.

AUGUSTUS, p. 46, 70, n.

BALDARUCCI, p. 169, n.

BASTIAN, p. 18, n. 20, 21, 22, 23.

BATTISTA, of Parma, p. 223.

— Franco, p. 247.

Beauty destroyed by fashion, p. 118, n. &c.

— wherein it consists, p. 35, 114, 115, n.

— (description of perfect) 111, 115, n.

— (idea of) how formed, 109, 111, n.

— various, 133, n.

— absolute or relative, p. 133, n.

Belle idée, what, p. 36, n. 115.

BELLINO, p. 1, 18, n. 230, 254.

BEYER, p. 180, n.

Books recommended to the painter, p. 97, n.

BOUCHIER, (Engraver) p. 192, n.

BOULOGNE, (Bon) p. 68, n.

BRAMANTE, p. 215.

CÆSAR, fond of painting, p. 51.

— how affected by the sight of Alexander's statue, p. 58.

CALABER, **QUINTUS**, p. 9.

CASTEL.

- CASTELFRANCO, p. 4, 64, 231, 232.
 ————— his character as an artist, p. 228.
 CASTIGLIONE quoted, p. 61.
 CHARLES V. (Emp.) his love for the Arts, p. 47, 242.
 ————— his respect for Titian, p. 46, 48, 55.
 CHRIST, how to be represented in painting, p. 73.
 CICERO quoted, p. 162, *n*.
 Climate, whether it has any influence upon the Arts,
 p. 65, *n*.
 Colours, (durability of the antient) p. 227, 228, *n*.
 Colouring, (a part of painting) p. 71, 152.
 Contours must be accurate, p. 108.
 —————, liney, to be avoided, p. 158.
 Contrast of light and shade, p. 155.
 CORREGIO, p. 5, 54, *n*.
 ————— his St. Jerome, p. 92, *n*.
 ————— excelled in the graceful, p. 206, *n*.
 ————— his character as an artist, p. 221 and *n*.
 ————— his Magdalen, p. 222, *n*.
 Costume to be faithfully observed, p. 82, 91.
 CRITO (Mr. Spence's) quoted, p. 115, *n*. 118, *n*.
 D'ALEMBERT (M.) quoted, p. 102, *n*.
 DANTE, p. 9, 46, 169, *n*. 198. and *n*.
 ————— quoted, p. 167.
 DE MARSY'S Poem on Painting quoted, p. 177, *n*.
 DEMETRIUS, (story of) p. 44.
 DEMOSTHENES, p. 46, 104, 130, *n*.
 DE PILES quoted, p. 17, *n*. 96, *n*. 125, *n*. 126, *n*.
 129, *n*.
 Design, (a part of painting) p. 71, 106.
 ————— defined, *id.* p. 106, 107, *n*.
 ————— implies a *whole*, p. 107, *n*.
 Diligence (too scrupulous) to be avoided, p. 161.
 Disposition of figures, p. 84.

Distortion

Distortion destructive of merit, p. 108.

DONATELLO, p. 73.

DOSSE, p. 18, n. 19.

Drama compared with a picture, p. 104.

Draperies to be considered, p. 149.

—— their thinness, p. 149.

—— to be thrown into large plaits, p. 150.

Du Bos quoted, p. 8, n. 28, n. 52, n. 55, n. 67, n. 97, n. 195, n.

Du Fresnoy quoted, p. 17, n. 22, n. 25, n. 96, n. 103, n. 129, n. 140, n. 151, n.

Du Quesnoy. Vid. FIAMINGO.

DURER, (ALBERT) p. 76. 77.

—— excelled in engraving, p. 77.

—— used gold as a material, p. 123, n.

ELIZABETH, (Q.) encouraged the Arts, p. 56, n.

Engraving, when invented, and by whom, p. 51, n.

—— much improved of late, p. 192, n.

Expression, p. 71, 162.

EURIPIDES, p. 78.

FABIUS, p. 58.

Fashion destructive of beauty, p. 118, n. &c.

FELIBIEN, his description of beauty, p. 115, n.

FIAMINGO, p. 173, n.

Figures, (subjects containing few) most eligible, p. 104.

FINIGUEZZI, (Mose) invented engraving, p. 51, n.

Finishing (high) to be avoided, p. 161.

FONTENELLE quoted, p. 67, n.

Foreshortening to be avoided, p. 144.

FRANCIS I. (of France) his munificence, p. 54, 66, n.

242.

FREDERIC BARBAROSSA (Emp.) p. 90. &c.

GARRICK,

- GARRICK**, (Mr.) his power over the mind of the audience, p. 164, n.
- GENIUS** necessary to the painter, and one of the sources of invention, p. 102.
- GIORGIONE**. Vid. CASTELFRANCO.
- GIRARDON**, p. 69, n. 131, n. 173, n.
- Gold used by Albert Durer as a material, p. 123.
- Golden locks, how to be understood, p. 122
- Grace**, p. 71, 206, n.
- called by the antients *venustas*, p. 237, and *Xaλος*, p. 20.
- (what masters have excelled in) p. 206, n.
- the last finishing and noblest part of beauty, p. 206, n.
- treated as such by the poets, p. 208, n.
- includes motion, p. 208.
- GRAY**, (Mr) quoted, p. 54, n.
- GREECE**, the seat of Arts, p. 61, n.
- GREEKS** forbade the practice of painting slaves, p. 56.
- GUIDO**, p. 206, n.
- Habits** to be conformable to the times and circumstances, p. 149.
- Harmony** to be observed, p. 89.
- HENRY VIII.** of England, invited Raphael to his court, p. 55.
- his munificence p. 6, n.
- invited Titian to his court, p. 244.
- Hercules**, (Farnesian) p. 133, n.
- History** to be strictly observed in painting, p. 105.
- when to be less attended to, p. 105.
- HOMER**, p. 26, 34.
- HOOLE**, (M.) his translation from Aristotle, p. 113, n.
- HORACE**, p. 181, n.
- quoted, p. 21, 75, 83, 101, 105, n. 142, 161, 165, 177, n.

JACOBI, de Lectione Poetarum characterized, p. 99, n.

Invention a part of painting, p. 71.

———— poetical, p. 25, n.

———— what to be observed in it, p. 72, 81, n.

———— its sources, p. 102.

———— comparative merits of Raphael and Michael

Angelo in regard to, p. 172.

Italian language recommended to the painter, p. 157, n.

Judgment, how formed, p. 35.

JULIO ROMANO, p. 5, 68, 179, 195, n. 205, n.

———— his character as an artist, p. 220.

JULIUS II. Pope, p. 55.

LAOCOON, (the celebrated statue of) p. 139, n.

LE BRUN, p. 68, n. 131, n. 163, n.

LE GROS, p. 67, n.

LE MOINE, p. 68, n.

LEO X. Pope, p. 55.

LE SUEUR, p. 68, n.

Licence when allowable, p. 105.

LIONARDO DA VINCI. Vid. VINCI.

LONGINUS quoted, p. 103, n. 104, n.

LOTO, (LORENZO) p. 157.

LOUIS XIV. his age the fourth era in the history of the Arts, p. 70, n.

LUCIAN, p. 168.

LULLI, a story of him, p. 154, n.

MAIGNARD, p. 68, n.

Manna, (fall of) how to be represented in painting, p. 83, &c.

MARC ANTONIO, (Engraver) p. 179, 182, &c. n.

MARTIAL quoted, p. 53.

- Manner of light and shadow**, p. 150, *n.*
MAZZOLA, (GIROAMO) p. 223.
MESSALA, p. 46.
MICHAEL ANGELO. *Vid.* ANGELO.
MILTON, p. 208, *n.*
MONETA, his lines under Aretin's portrait, p. 180, *n.*
MOSES, how to be represented in painting, p. 74, 88.
Motion to be given to the figures, p. 142.
MUMMIUS, his taste, p. 52.
MUSÆUS, p. 209, *n.*

Nature, the criterion of beauty, p. 35.
 ——— never perfectly beautiful, p. 109.
 ——— this doctrine considered, *id.* *n.*
 ——— the school of the imitative Arts, p. 185, *n.*
NAVAGERO, p. 241.
NERO, (Emperor) p. 51.
Nude, muscular or delicate, p. 132.
 ——— delicate more difficult, p. 135.

ORDER, p. 72.
Ornaments (ambitious) to be retrenched, p. 161.
OVID.
 ——— his description of Niobe, p. 26.
 ——— his compliment to Apelles, p. 127.

Painter, his office, p. 24.
 ——— must be acquainted with History and the Poets, p. 96.
 ——— must feel the passion he would communicate, p. 164.
PAINTING, how divided, p. 71.
 ——— nearly allied to Poetry, &c. p. 25, 33, 34, 83, 130.
 ——— how difficult to excel in, p. 32.

- PAINTING, its power, p. 25.
 ——— a noble art, and why, p. 56, 60.
 ——— useful in religion, p. 57, and *n.*
 ——— its utility, p. 59, 60.
 ——— ornamental, p. 62, &c.
 ——— its state in France under Louis XIV.
 p. 68, *n.*
 ——— in what ages it has succeeded best, p. 70, *n.*
 ——— has thriven in the same times with Literature, p. 130, *n.*
 PARMEGIANO, (FRANCISCO) p. 5, 222.
 ——— *ÆN. VICUS*, p. 50.
 PARMEGIANINO, p. 224.
 PARRHASIUS, p. 80, 130, *n.* 153.
 Passions may be expressed in painting, p. 27, 162.
 PAUL III. pope, p. 55.
 PAUL, (St) how to be represented in painting, p. 73.
 PAULO VERONESE, p. 68, *n.*
 PERRINO del VAGA, p. 5.
 ——— his character as an artist, p. 225.
 PERSIUS, p. 185.
 Perspective necessary to be known, p. 156.
 PETRARCA, p. 9. 198, 199, *n.* 207.
 ——— quoted, p. 8, 27, 34, 160, 208.
 PHIDIAS, p. 130, *n.*
 PHILIP of Macedon, p. 70.
 PHILIP II. of Spain, p. 49, 50.
 Pictures, the vast price they bore among the antients,
 p. 52.
 PIRANESE (Cav.) engraver, p. 192, *n.*
 PLINY, p. 40, 52, 56, 128, *n.* 147, 153, *n.* 178, *n.*
 189, *n.* 207, 214, *n.*
 PLUTARCH, p. 227, *n.*
 POLIDORO, p. 5.
 ——— his character as an artist, p. 224.
 POLIGNOTUS, p. 8.

POPE, (Mr.) quoted, p. 28, n. 161, n.

PORDONONE, p. 5.

———— his character as an artist, p. 225.

POUSSIN, p. 68, n. 70, n.

PRAXITELES, his Venus of Gnidos, p. 128, 130, n.

PRITCHARD, (Mrs.) her power over the audience,
p. 164, n.

Prints (Essay on) quoted, p. 192, n.

Propriety to be observed, p. 78, 133, 139.

PROPERTIUS, p. 175, n.

Proportion the principal source of beauty, p. 114, 131.

———— its variety, p. 123.

———— (exact) how measured, p. 124.

PROTOGENES, p. 8, 44, 153, 161, 245, n.

PUGET, p. 69, n.

QUINTILIAN quoted, p. 29, n.

RAFFAELLE BORGHINI, p. 169, n.

RAGUENET, (Monumens de Rome, &c.) p. 190, n.
191, n. 193, n. 205, n.

RAPHAEL, p. 5, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 21, 31, 55, 62,
63, 67, n. 68, n. 89, 90, n. 130, n. 142, n. 171,
179, 181, 184, n. 185, 200, 205, 209, 210,
212, 218, 233, 241, 246.

———— invited to England by Henry VIII. p. 55.

———— his picture of Fred. Barbarossa, p. 90.

———— his School of Athens, p. 91, n.

———— excelled all others in the knowledge of hu-
man nature, p. 99.

———— his practice in sketching, p. 100.

———— his letter to Co. Castiglione quoted, p. 110, n.

———— his Galatea, p. 191, and n.

———— sometimes complied with custom against
judgment, p. 123.

———— his cartoon of Paul and Barnabas, p. 129, n.

———— his picture of St. Peter preaching, p. 150, n.

RAPHAEL,

RAPHAEL, his cartoon of the miraculous draught of fishes, p. 147, *n*.

———— of Paul at Athens, p. 193, *n*.

———— his picture of St. Cecilia, p. 193.

———— of the Transfiguration, p. 193, &c. and *n*.

———— his portraits, p. 215.

———— his comparative merit with M. Angelo, as to invention, p. 172, &c.

———— as to design, p. 195, &c.

———— as to colouring, p. 213, &c.

———— his Roxana, p. 186.

———— his cartoon of the giving the keys, p. 195, *n*.

———— carefully studied the antique, p. 129, *n*. 204.

———— his battle of Constantine and Maxentius, p. 205, and *n*.

———— excelled in the graceful, p. 206, and *n*.

———— also in architecture, p. 215.

———— his general character, p. 215, &c.

Relievo to be given to the figures, p. 148.

———— how produced, p. 158.

RICHARDSON quoted, p. 91, *n*. 193, *n*.

RICAUT, p. 68, *n*.

RIPA, p. 184, *n*.

ROGER, (of Brussels) p. 91, *n*.

ROUX, p. 66, *n*.

RUBENS, his allegories faulty, p. 184, *n*.

———— errs against the costume, p. 92, *n*.

———— his Treatise of the Imitation of the Ancients, quoted, p. 129, *n*.

SALVATOR ROSA, a poet as well as painter, p. 25.

SALLUST quoted, p. 59.

SANNAZZARO, his epigram on Venice, p. 93, *n*.

SANTORINI, p. 68, *n*.

SARASIN, p. 69, n.

SARTO (ANDREA del). Vide ANDREA.

SEIPIO, how affected by statuary, p. 59.

Sentimens agreables (Theorie de) quoted, p. 133, n.

SHAFTSBURY, (Lord) quoted, p. 6, n. 89, n. 104, n. 107, n.

SHAKESPEARE quoted, p. 79, n. 80, n.

———— his knowledge of human nature, p. 80, n.

Sketches to be frequently repeated, p. 99.

SOCRATES, p. 130, n.

SPENCE (Mr.) his Crito quoted, p. 115, n. 118, n. 206, n.

———— his Polymetis quoted, p. 184, n.

Stage recommended as a school for the painter, p. 166, n.

STATUARY, its effects, p. 59.

———— its state in France under Louis XIV.

p. 69, n.

STRANGE, (Mr.) engraver, p. 192, n. 222, n.

SUBLIME has its origin in the greatness of the soul,
p. 103, n.

Tablature, what, p. 107, n.

THEODON, p. 69, n.

TIBERIUS, (Emp) the vast price he gave for one picture, p. 52.

TIMANTES, p. 8, 26, n. 78.

———— his Iphigenia, p. 78.

TITIAN, p. 2, 3, 4, 5, 18, 47, 48, 49, 55, 63, 64, 91, 95, 130, n. 226, 240, 245, 246.

———— his picture of Peter Martyr, p. 2, and n. 171, 238.

———— his pictures repaired by Bastian, p. 23.

———— his death of Germanicus, p. 26, n.

———— his nude for Car. Farnese admired by M. Angelo, p. 50.

TITIAN,

TITIAN, his picture of Fred. Barbarossa, p. 91, 240.

— sometimes complied with custom against judgment, p. 123, n.

— excelled in the delicate, p. 173.

— his general character as an artist, p. 227.

— an account of his life, p. 219, &c.

— his Ascension, p. 233.

— Madonna and Child, p. 236.

— St. John the Baptist, p. 238.

— invited to Rome by Leo X. p. 241.

— by Francis I. and Charles V.

p. 242.

— to England, by Henry VIII.

p. 244.

VAGA (PERRINO del). Vide PERRINO.

Variety to be attended to by the painter, p. 139.

— not to be affected, p. 141.

VASARI recommended, p. 169.

— quoted, p. 216, n. 223, 226, n. 233, 240.

VENICE, (Sannazzaro's epigram on) p. 93, n.

VENIUS, (OTHO) p. 184, n.

Venus of Medici, p. 133, n.

VINCI, (LIONARDO da) p. 54, 66, n.

— his character as an artist, p. 219, and n.

VIRGIL, p. 26, n. 189.

VIVARINO, p. 234.

Unity of action necessary in a picture. p. 194, n.

— observable in those of Raphael, p. 195, n.

Unnatural, to be avoided, p. 106.

VOLTAIRE quoted, p. 69, n.

Vraisemblance necessary, p. 73..

WARBURTON, (Bishop) p. 195, n.

WATELET,

WATELET quoted, p. 166, n. 207, n.

WEBB (Mr.) quoted, p. 19, n. 208, n.

Whole, (it is necessary for a picture to form a)
p. 107. n.

WINKELMAN (L'Abbé) quoted, p. 67, n. 173, n.
189, n. 206, n.

XENOPHON, p. 130, n.

——— quoted, p. 36, n. 162, n.

ZEUXIS, p. 6, 130, n.

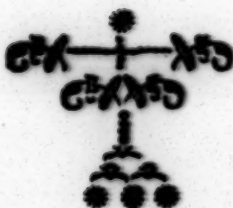
——— his Helen, p. 36. 109.

——— gave away his works, p. 53.

——— his method of forming the idea of beauty,
p. 109.

——— his grapes, p. 152.

ZUCCHERO, p. 169, n.



10